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No. 116

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We pray, Almighty God, that our minds and hearts would be open to the gifts of the spirit so that our daily experiences are not only the necessary duties that must be done, but that we would see more clearly the blessings of the spirit. Grant us new insight so we behold the gifts of wonder and beauty in Your creation and the marvelous gifts of love and grace and peace. Give us, we pray, a new vision of the meaning of justice that deals with the needs of every person and helps bring us all together in respect and dignity. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DOGGETT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 457. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to increase the amount of leave

time available to a Federal employee in any year in connection with serving as an organ donor, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2670. An act making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2670) "An Act making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. GREGG, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. INOUE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed a bill of the following title in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1076. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance programs providing health care and other benefits for veterans, to authorize major medical facility projects, to reform eligibility for burial in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain 15 1-minutes on each side.

THE BUREAUCRATIC DAY-DREAMERS AT THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND ARE AT IT AGAIN

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, the bureaucratic daydreamers at the International Monetary Fund are at it again. They are exploring the far reaches of reality and resorting to voodoo economics.

My home State of Nevada is the largest gold producing State in the Nation. This vital industry helps put food on the table, buy homes, send kids to colleges for thousands of Nevada families. The trouble has been on the horizon for the past several months as the IMF has been scheming to dump part of their gold reserve on to the open market in an effort to hide its debt losses.

Their latest debt forgiveness scheme is nothing more than smoke and mirrors and voodoo economics.

The gold scheme sale will lead to a disrupted and flooded commodity market which translates into a plummeting economy for many countries. The reality in Nevada is still the same. It will cause more mines in North America to begin closing at an even more alarming pace and thousands of America's hardest working men and women will be out of work, unable to feed their families; all because of the IMF.

Congress has the power to stop this ill-conceived IMF scheme and I urge my colleagues to oppose the voodoo economics of this taxpayer giveaway.

A WHOLE NEW POLICY ON TERRORISM IN AMERICA: IF TERRORISTS APOLOGIZE, THEY ARE SET FREE

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, 12 terrorists from Puerto Rico who are responsible for 130 bombings in America, killing 6 Americans and wounding many more have been pardoned by the President. Now, if that is not enough to get away with murder, check this out: to get the pardon, the terrorists had to promise to give up violence. Unbelievable, Madam Speaker.

A whole new policy on terrorism in America. If terrorists apologize, they are set free. Beam me up, Madam Speaker.

An America that pardons terrorists is an America that invites more terrorism. I yield back the pain and suffering of their victims and their families.

#### DEMOCRATS DO NOT TRUST AMERICANS TO SPEND THEIR OWN MONEY THE RIGHT WAY

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Madam Speaker, many Democrats have stated that tax cuts would be risky. Well, of course they would. They believe the average Americans, to quote the President, might not spend it right.

Is this not the perfect expression of a liberal mindset? They really do believe that money that people earn does not really belong to them. They do not trust people to spend it right, whatever that means. After all, we all know that Washington knows best. It seems clear to me that Democrats do not quite agree with the proposition that rich or poor the money people earn belongs to them, not the Government.

In fact, liberals imply that any time the Government cuts taxes, it is doing everyone a favor, as if giving someone something. It is not giving anyone anything. It is merely taking less from what is already yours.

So every time we hear a Democrat call a Republican tax relief package risky, just remember why they are doing so.

#### COULD IT BE THE REAL REASON REPUBLICANS ARE DROPPING THE TAX BILL IS THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY VETOED IT?

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Speaker, surely one of the most bizarre announcements of this do-little Congress was the declaration yesterday by the Republican leadership that there will be no tax bill this year, because there simply will not be enough time to consider the matter after the President vetoes the Republican tax giveaway. This is the same Republican leadership, of course, that has delayed now over a

month in sending the tax bill to the President so that it can be vetoed, as they knew he would do all along.

Could it be that the real reason that they are dropping the tax bill is that the American people have already vetoed it?

They have vetoed the idea of borrowing from a still rising national debt to give more to those who have a PAC and a lobbyist here in Washington for the hundreds of billions of dollars of special interest tax provisions in this measure. They have vetoed the idea of taking from Social Security and Medicare to give a tax break to those at the top when most Americans will get pennies out of this tax proposal.

I believe the American people have vetoed this bad idea, and perhaps that is the real reason that even the Republican leadership, that has done so little this year, is giving up on the tax cut.

#### PARDON FOR TERRORISTS

(Mr. ROYCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I could not believe my eyes when I read the newspaper this morning that President Clinton had given clemency to 12 imprisoned members of the Puerto Rican terrorist organization, the FALN.

U.S. policy to terrorists has always been very consistent; it has always been very clear. We must make no concessions to terrorists. That has been the policy, not to pardon terrorists.

We should be sending a strong message that terrorism would not be tolerated. As my friend, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT), has pointed out, the FALN was responsible for 130 bombings in the United States that killed six people, at least; injured scores of other Americans; three police officers were maimed for life; two were blinded; one lost a leg while trying to diffuse one of the bombs that the FALN planted in 1982.

What does the President have to say to these victims and their families? What does Vice President GORE have to say about releasing these law breakers? All 12 terrorists given clemency were convicted on charges of seditious conspiracy and possession of weapons and possession of explosives. They belong in prison.

#### THE KIDNAPPINGS, KILLINGS AND FORCED EVACUATIONS IN EAST TIMOR ABSOLUTELY SHOULD NOT BE HAPPENING

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, I too am deeply disturbed by the horrifying human rights violations currently taking place in Indonesia in East Timor. The kidnappings, the killings, the forced evacuations absolutely should

not be happening. The horrific beheadings, with severed human heads being paraded around on sticks, is barbaric.

The government of Indonesia imposed martial law on the country to control the violence that erupted after the East Timorese voted for independence. Unfortunately, reliable reports suggest that Indonesian military officials are actually involved in orchestrating the unrest and violence that is occurring right now.

Madam Speaker, I call on President Habibie and the other Indonesian officials to accept the results of the referendum, get control of their military and bring an immediate end to the horrifying bloodshed and violence that is terrorizing the people.

#### RESPONSIBLE TAX CUTS

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, only in this Congress, with a small Republican majority, would we experience the following: cuts in housing funds, cuts in science and space funds, cuts in education funds, no planning to safeguard Medicare for the future growth, almost \$6 billion in national debt that is owed from the last 50 years, and the major issue we are talking about for the next few weeks is whether we want a tax cut.

Let us be clear about the debate. I would like to have a tax cut, too, just like most Americans, but the biggest concern we have is making sure Social Security is there, Medicare is there, and that we also pay down the national debt.

We cannot ignore those issues and only talk about a tax cut. The Republican plan for tax cuts is financially irresponsible. It only passed the House by a few votes and now they are going to use it for the next month to talk about how bad the President is. Let us put that aside and get on about our business of legislating.

During the August recess, I talked to hundreds of constituents in my district in Houston, like people did all over the country, and they talked about the need to safeguard Social Security, Medicare, and pay down that debt.

#### ORGAN DONATION IS AS SIMPLE AS FILLING OUT A DONOR CARD

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, we know that life is short, and the 60,000 patients who are currently on a waiting list to get organs know just how precious time is.

Sadly enough, only 20,000 people this year will receive organ transplants, and today nine people will lose their lives because a match was not found.

As the waiting list for organs continues to grow, so does the need for

organ procurement. Organ donation is as simple as filling out a donor card and by just one person's donation as many as 50 people may benefit through transplantation.

It is important that we as Members of Congress raise awareness on the importance of organ and tissue donations to increase donors across our districts and throughout our land. There is no greater gift than the gift of life. We must encourage this giving and work to leave a lasting legacy to prevent the needless and tragic deaths of thousands of Americans each year.

#### VOTE NO ON THE D.C. CONFERENCE REPORT

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, in one of the great ironies of this session, I am forced to ask for a no vote on the D.C. conference report that will come before us later today. My appropriation is actually a local budget with the old federal payment now abolished. Though the budget comes balanced, replete with tax cuts and a surplus, it has proved needlessly contentious here, dragging Members into local matters that most want to avoid as somebody else's business about which Members necessarily know little.

The new Mayor, revitalized City Council and I cannot live with backdoor approaches to weakened self-government. Take it straight from D.C. itself. We all ask for a no vote on the D.C. conference report.

□ 1015

#### WE MUST PROVIDE REAL, MEANINGFUL, AND REASONABLE TAX RELIEF FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, Republicans in the House of Representatives are keeping their word to the American people. As a member of the Committee on Appropriations, I am very proud of the work that the committee has done and led by the gentleman from Florida who has crafted bills that will keep the agreement and maintain the budget caps that we promised back in 1997.

On the other side, the flip side, the President's budget proposal busts the budget spending by some 42 billion over our agreed upon limit. How does he get away with that my colleagues ask? By using gimmicks, by assuming new taxes on the American people knowing full well that the Republican Congress would never agree to those tax hikes.

Now we understand that a supplemental spending plan is coming our way from the White House. This emer-

gency spending would add up to 12 billion more.

Madam Speaker, this illustrates our point about why we must provide meaningful tax relief to the American people. If we do not give the American people back their money, it is sure to be spent by the big government crowd here in Washington, D.C. That would be a huge disservice to the people who pay our bills, the American taxpayer.

#### STAND UP AND SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE MASSACRES GOING ON IN EAST TIMOR

(Mr. CAPUANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CAPUANO. Madam Speaker, 200,000 refugees, 3,000 people per hour leaving their homes and their country. Martial law imposed, paramilitary people roaming the countryside. Sound familiar? Four and a half months ago we did this in Kosovo. I thought the problem then was that this House did not have anything to say about it until we already had troops on the ground. I think we need to stand up now and say something about the massacres that are going on in East Timor.

One way or the other I happen to think that we need to do something. I think America stands for democracy; I think we need to stand up. That is why today's resolution being filed already has 20 cosponsors. It was only drafted yesterday in bipartisan support, and I ask every Member to look at that resolution and to join us to have this Congress stand up before, before we commit troops either ourselves or the United Nations or SEATO or someone else.

Stand up and be counted. Do our job.

#### LIBERALS HATE THE IDEA OF ALLOWING AMERICANS TO KEEP MORE OF THEIR OWN MONEY

(Mr. WELDON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Madam Speaker, the Washington Post editorial page has editorialized yet again against the Republican tax cut proposals. Hardly a week goes by without the Washington Post and other liberal publications warning against the idea of letting Americans keep more of their hard-earned money. To me that is a pretty good indication that it is exactly what we need to do.

Of course, the same crowd that called Ronald Reagan's tax cuts dangerous, foolish, and irresponsible are now singing the same tune today. They are the same people who just 2 years ago said that it was impossible to cut taxes and balance the budget at the same time. And, of course, they are the same crowd that could not praise President Clinton enough for raising taxes by a record amount.

See, Madam Speaker, some people really do not believe that people can spend their own money better than Washington can, and they really hate the idea that people should be able to keep more of the fruits of their hard-earned labor and reap the benefits of saving and sacrificing and realizing their dreams, and of course they are against tax cuts.

#### GOP TAX CUT SELLS CHILDREN SHORT

(Mr. CROWLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, over the August recess, the message from America was clear:

We do not want the GOP tax break.

What is realized, the GOP plan provides little tax relief for middle- and lower-income Americans, the ones who need it the most. It does nothing to continue our efforts to reduce the Federal debt. It does nothing to strengthen Social Security or Medicare, and it does nothing, it does nothing to help the dire conditions of our schools, the infrastructure of our schools in the United States. Republicans offer only a small arbitrage provision in the recently passed tax bill as their aid for our beleaguered school system. This initiative would provide minimal tax benefits to school districts. These benefits can actually delay school construction for more than 2 years.

We can fix our highways; we can rebuild our bridges. Why do we sit by and do nothing for the infrastructure that houses our Nation's greatest asset, our children? There are many chilling accounts of near fatal accidents at schools in New York, and I fear the day that conditions at our schools deteriorate to the point where accidents are simply unavoidable.

I know that providing tax relief to our schools for construction assistance is not only the right thing to do as a Congressman, but the right thing to do as a new parent and as an American.

#### THE REPUBLICAN PLAN IS FOR ALL AMERICANS, NOT JUST THE RICH

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, Congressional Budget Office projects approximately \$3 trillion in budget surpluses over the next 10 years. The Republican plan would take \$2 trillion of that money and put it in the Social Security and Medicare lockbox. That means that \$2 trillion goes towards retirement security for those two important programs. It also reduces the debt by \$2 trillion. The remaining \$1 trillion would be returned to the taxpayers, all taxpayers.

Now my liberal friends in the House here keep saying it is tax cuts for the rich, tax cuts for the rich. It is just not true. It is for all Americans.

The details? For example: The marriage penalty.

Right now, a married couple in this country pays higher taxes than a couple who is living together and not married. That is just not right. So it phases out the marriage penalty.

It also eliminates over time the death tax or the inheritance tax. Right now the Federal Government can take up to 55 percent of what a person has earned during the course of their life when they die. It means the family farm gets sold, small businesses get sold, people lose their jobs.

So let us save those important programs and cut taxes.

#### AS THE CHAMPION OF DEMOCRACY, OUR VOICE SHOULD BE THE LOUDEST FOR PROTECTING THE PEOPLE OF EAST TIMOR

(Mrs. LOWEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LOWEY. Madam Speaker, on August 30 the world watched as the people of East Timor exercised their right to self-determination for the first time with nearly full participation of eligible voters; and by a staggering margin, the East Timorese chose independence from Indonesia over autonomy within it. This courage has been rewarded with the destruction of East Timor, the displacement of its people, the inaction of the Indonesian government. Since the election, hundreds have died; and nearly one-quarter of the East Timorese have been forced to flee their homes. Indonesian officials have done nothing to stop the violence and to protect the U.N. personnel there.

For the people of East Timor time is running out. We must do our part to stop the horror; we must pledge logistical support to an armed peace-keeping force to restore order in East Timor. Until order is restored, all bilateral nonhumanitarian assistance to Indonesia should be suspended; and we should use our leverage in international financial institutions to cut off multilateral assistance. We should advocate in the U.N. Security Council punitive measures against Indonesia if Habibie fails to cooperate.

As the champion of democracy, our voice should be the loudest.

#### CLEMENCY FOR PUERTO RICAN TERRORISTS

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Madam Speaker, my colleague from New York who preceded me in the well accurately points out yet another problem in the world, and while this House in a bipartisan basis will work its will in short order to deal with this crisis, it reminds us that we bear the bitter fruits of confu-

sion, naivete, or worse on the part of this administration in dealing with foreign policy.

Madam Speaker, the best example and the latest example is the confusing dilemma in which our Commander in Chief has placed the American people because he apparently has chosen to reward terrorists. It is sad to note the President of the United States has granted clemency to about one dozen Puerto Rican terrorists who advocated the armed overthrow of the United States Government.

Madam Speaker, the President says that he will take the terrorists at their word.

Madam Speaker, as we have learned, when we cannot trust our highest elected officials and take them at their word, how can we possibly take the word of terrorists?

#### YOU DO THE CRIME, YOU DO THE TIME

(Mr. WISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WISE. Madam Speaker, I agree. When the President is right, I stand with him; but I also have to speak out when I believe he is wrong.

Now I oppose the President's act of granting clemency to terrorists. The acts that these people were convicted of are not necessarily all that they would have been involved in. Often a U.S. Attorney in order to get a conviction will bring those cases that are most evident, where the evidence is best, even though there were other cases that could have been brought.

The only authority of the law is when wrongdoers know that the penalty will be fully carried out. This becomes doubly important in the act of terrorism because it is also essential to remove those people as quickly as possible from the scene so they cannot carry out other groups and so we send a message internationally.

Madam Speaker, these people were part of a group that brought death and destruction. They maimed police officers. They should serve the entire term.

There is an old saying: "You do the crime, you do the time," and that applies to this situation especially.

#### WE MUST RESPOND TO THE CRISIS IN EAST TIMOR

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, as we gather here today in Congress it is nighttime in East Timor. Thousands of refugees are fleeing the country.

East Timor is a country of 800,000 people, and nearly a third of them have had to flee since the election the other day. At that time, the people of East Timor voted overwhelmingly for independence; but instead violence rules in East Timor. And the world has not spo-

ken out adequately, appropriately, sufficiently in any way to respond.

In the course of 500 years of domination of other countries' cultures including the Japanese occupation of 50 years, never in that time were the religious institutions attacked. But in the last few days, the home of Bishop Belo was bombed, was set afire. This place was a refuge, a sanctuary for people who came for shelter from the violence and has been set afire by the militia and the military.

Madam Speaker, how much more will have to happen there before we will act to cut off the funds from the IMF? Support the Capuano resolution that will come to the floor today.

#### GOOD NEWS FROM THE TASK FORCE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I think I have exciting news, regarding what we have accomplished in our Social Security Task Force. Our bipartisan Task Force has been working on Social Security and the possibility of a bipartisan agreement to move a solution ahead. Last year, I was asked to head up a task force on Social Security with Democrats and Republicans. That was officially started early this year as a task force of the Committee on the Budget. Republicans and Democrats, when we started the discussion were inclined to have little agreement.

The good news is we have come up with 18 findings that the Republicans and Democrats have agreed on. Next week we will have a complete report of this task force effort. I am excited. Let us keep it in our minds. Let us not be nullified by the fact that we have a surplus and somehow that surplus is going to somehow fix Social Security. It does not.

#### THE REPUBLICAN PLAN IS OUT OF STEP WITH AMERICAN VALUES

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, American working families today want to use the budget surplus in a responsible way that protects, strengthens Medicare and Social Security, that pays down the debt. The Republican plan is out of step with American values. It does nothing to extend Social Security by a single day. It dedicates not one penny to Medicare. It would force deep cuts in education, crime fighting, and national defense.

But let me tell my colleagues there is a quote from one of my Republican colleagues that sums up their views about working families, and I quote: The American people are not too enthusiastic about a tax-cut package because

most of them are not paying taxes, and the top 1 percent of America earns 70 percent of all income and pays 32 percent of all taxes. The bottom 50 percent of America's income earners only pay collectively 4.8 percent of the taxes, so it is not surprising that they are not going to benefit.

□ 1030

They do not want a tax cut. Not paying taxes? Not paying taxes? You talk to working families in this country today and find out whether or not they are paying taxes. They want and need targeted tax breaks. They also need to have Social Security and Medicare extended on their behalf.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF A MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. REYNOLDS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 281 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 281

*Resolved*, That it shall be in order at any time on Thursday, September 9, 1999, or on Friday September 10, 1999, for the Speaker to entertain a motion that the House suspend the rules and adopt the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 180) expressing the sense of Congress that the President should not have granted clemency to terrorists.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of the resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 281 provides for the consideration of House Resolution 180, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President should not have granted clemency to convicted terrorists of the Armed Forces of the National Liberation, the FALN.

Last night the Committee on Rules held an emergency meeting to provide for suspension days on Thursday, September 9, and Friday, September 10, in order that the Congress be allowed to quickly respond to recent presidential action.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very short legislative week. Members of Congress just returned from meeting with their constituents during their August work period and honoring our Nation's workforce on Labor Day. In addition, Congress cannot extend the legislative week in respect to Rosh Hashanah. Therefore, the resolution will be considered under the suspension of the rules in order to accommodate the measure in this very short legislative week. Furthermore, the suspension

process is normally used to consider such bipartisan measures.

The rule provides that it shall be in order at any time on Thursday, September 9, 1999, or Friday, September 10, 1999, for the Speaker to entertain a motion that the House suspend the rules and adopt a concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 180, expressing the sense of Congress that the President should not have granted clemency to these terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, on April 14, 1986, the United States military forces bombed the headquarters and terrorist facilities of Libyan strongman Mu'ammar Qadhafi. The strikes were ordered in retaliation for a cowardly act of terrorism that left two dead, including Sergeant Kenneth Ford, and 230 wounded, including 50 American military personnel.

In announcing the air strikes, President Ronald Reagan said, "Those who remember history understand better than most that there is no security, no safety, in the appeasement of evil. It must be the core of Western policy that there be no sanctuary for terror."

Yet we are here today because sanctuary has been offered to convicted terrorists. And make no mistake about that. The 16 Members of the FALN, duly tried and convicted, have not been imprisoned because of their political beliefs. They have been jailed because their reign of terror left six dead and dozens more permanently maimed, including members of our law enforcement community.

FALN has claimed responsibility for 130 bombings of civilian, political and military sites; and according to the Federal Bureau of Prisons, they are prepared to strike again.

Why, then, would President Clinton offer them clemency? Why should they be released from prison?

Not one of these terrorists contested the evidence against them. None showed remorse. In fact, in the years since their conviction for numerous felonies, including conspiracy, not a single one asked for clemency.

Much has been written and said about President Clinton's reasons for making this offer of clemency. I will leave those discussions to the pundits and to the commentators. But I will say this: this action is more than misguided, it is more than wrong, it is a very real threat to the safety and security of the American people.

Of course, their release is not without conditions. They needed to renounce violence. After almost a month, with the clock ticking, they finally agreed. Isn't something very, very wrong, when someone needs to be coerced and cajoled to renounce violence?

Mr. Speaker, not a single act of terrorism has been attributed to the FALN since these individuals were jailed. Why then should the power of the presidency be used to give them the freedom to renew their reign of fear and terror?

This House, this Congress and this Nation have been engaged in a great

debate over how to best ensure the safety and security of our homes, our neighborhoods and our schools. During the course of that debate, President Clinton himself said that our responsibility is "not only to give our thoughts and prayers to the victims and their families, but to intensify our resolve to make America a safer place."

Mr. Speaker, we can make America a safer place, and we can start by keeping criminals off our streets and terrorists behind bars.

I urge the adoption of this rule and its underlying resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, my dear friend the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) for yielding me the customary half hour.

Mr. Speaker, normally suspension bills can be brought up only on Mondays and Tuesdays, but this rule will add two more days, Thursday and Friday, and it will add those days for one reason, for one resolution, a resolution that my Republican colleagues are in a great, great hurry to pass.

They are in such a great hurry to pass this resolution, Mr. Speaker, that they are creating this special process just to bring this bill to the floor. So while we are rushing the resolution of the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) to the floor on a fast track, Mr. Speaker, I would like to propose adding some other bills to that same fast track, bills addressing issues that are much higher on the American people's agenda.

I think we should rush a patients' bill of rights to the floor to make sure doctors and patients make medical decisions and not insurance companies and CPAs.

I think we should rush a gun safety bill to the floor to get guns off our streets and get those guns out of our schools.

I think we should rush to the floor a bill protecting Social Security and protecting Medicare, which is scheduled to fall apart starting the year 2015.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are crying out for HMO reform, gun safety legislation, and Medicare reform. I say let us add those bills to the agenda.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA).

(Mr. FOSSELLA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this is a defining moment for the United States of America as far as I am concerned. The question before us today is going to be what

type of signal do we send to terrorists contemplating acts of terrorism against this Nation?

This was the President's spokesperson yesterday, Mr. Lockhart, saying, "You know, I think our efforts to bring terrorists to justice are one of the highest priorities of the President's national security agenda."

Several weeks ago this White House offered clemency to 16 known terrorists, individuals who were part of a group known as the FALN that engaged in a reign of terror across this country, but primarily from New York to Chicago, a group that claims responsibility for 130 bombings, a group that killed innocent people and maimed innocent people during the seventies and eighties, and, if they were not caught, who knows how many more innocent people would have died?

Now, there are those who have advocated for the release of these terrorists for years. That does not make it right. Let us put a human face on what this group claims responsibility for.

A man by the name of Frank Connor, who in 1975 was having lunch in downtown Manhattan in Fraunces Tavern. Just because he was having lunch, an FALN bomb went off and killed him. His sons, Joseph Connor and Thomas Connor, were 9 and 11 years old at the time. Joseph Connor was celebrating his ninth birthday that day. His father never made it home. His wife was made a widow.

Or Diana Berger, whose husband was having lunch that very same day in Fraunces Tavern, who was 6 months pregnant with their first child. Her husband never made it home.

Or fast forward several years later to December 31, 1982, New Year's Eve in downtown New York once again, when an FALN bomb exploded, leaving Officer Rocco Pascarella without a leg. And when two of his colleagues, Officers Richard Pastorella and Anthony Semft responded to that bomb threat, they were called to another scene, another FALN bomb. And when Richard Pastorella was 18 inches from that bomb, it detonated.

Today, Officer Pastorella is blind in both eyes. He has no fingers on his right hand. He has 20 screws in his head to keep his face together. He has undergone 13 operations. His partner, Anthony Semft, is blind in one eye. He has had reconstructive surgery. He is partially deaf. And those are just some of the victims of this FALN organization.

Now we are about to set these people free, who call themselves freedom fighters? Now we are about to set these people free.

This group, they are not a bunch of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. They are a terrible, terrible group. These people had no regard for human life. They participated in this network that would rob and steal, that would videotape making bombs.

What were they going to do with those bombs? They were going to be

used against innocent people. And the President has offered clemency to these individuals. Two of them have renounced it because they believe what they did was justified, that they are political prisoners. Well, tell that to the Berger family, tell that to the Pastorellas, tell that to the Pascarellas, tell that to every innocent person across this Nation who feels the best and most important priority we can do as public officials is to protect them.

In Oklahoma City several years ago, Terry Nichols was nowhere near the bomb scene, but he was sentenced to life. Can you imagine the outrage of the American people if in 10 or 15 years the then President offers clemency to Terry Nichols because he was nowhere near the bomb scene?

We have called upon the President to rescind that offer of clemency. I am afraid it may be too late.

□ 1045

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) for introducing this resolution that he has brought before us today. I also thank the leadership for bringing this matter to the House floor with appropriate alacrity.

It is important to remember that the FALN targeted police officers with their violence. One of my constituents that the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) referred to, a former New York City police officer, Rocco Pascarella, lost his leg in an FALN attack in New York City on December 31, 1982. He lost the sight in one of his eyes.

By targeting police officers who were sworn to serve and protect our citizens, the FALN has targeted all of us. As I join with the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) with what I expect to be an overwhelming majority of our colleagues calling on the President to withdraw his offer of clemency, I am also gratified that the Committee on Government Reform, on which I serve, has subpoenaed documents from the administration related to this unprecedented clemency offer.

We look forward to further proceedings in that direction. I urge my colleagues to fully support this resolution, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY).

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule and of the resolution, and I want to commend my good friend, the gentleman from Staten Island, New York (Mr. FOSSELLA), for his work on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, this is really about the respect for law in this country, and

whether folks who have decided to use terrorist activities and criminal behavior against innocent individuals should pay a price as dictated by the law, or whether we are going to turn our backs on law enforcement and the rule of law in this country.

What would happen if the President, whoever he may be in a few years, would grant clemency to the World Trade Center bombers, or the Oklahoma City terrorists? Or to my liberal friends, how about the folks who have bombed abortion clinics? Would they be a good subject for having clemency granted? I do not think so.

Basically what we have here is an issue of common sense and the rule of law. One hundred and thirty FALN bomb attacks on civilian and military targets, six people dead, dozens wounded.

I was based, Mr. Speaker, in New York City in the early seventies, right before these terrorist attacks took place, when I was stationed there with the FBI. I have had some discussions with some of my friends who had served in New York, and still some of them currently serve in New York, as well as with the FBI headquarters.

I can tell the Members without exception that those gentlemen who are sworn to uphold the law and in fact arrested these criminals are adamantly opposed to this action by the President. I would ask that the House pass this by a substantial margin and send a strong message to the White House that the rule of law must be protected.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA).

(Mr. FOSSELLA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, just for the purposes of debate, let me remind folks what we are talking about here. The power of clemency is an awesome power that is granted to the President under Article II, Section 2, Clause 1 of the Constitution, that says, "The President shall have the power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment."

The party in power gives the President unlimited authority to grant full and committee pardons, conditional pardons, clemency, such as commuting sentences, reversing conditions, or nullifying conditions of release.

This President has exercised this awesome power only three times since he has been President. President Bush, to my understanding, did it three times. There have been more than 3,000 applications for clemency, and Lord knows how many other people sitting in prison would want this power of clemency granted to them, as well.

Of the three who have been released or granted clemency in the last 7 years, one was subsequently convicted and

sent back to prison. So this is not something that is done every day.

Now, all at once, 16 terrorists are being offered this power of clemency. Most of the 16 terrorists were charged with seditious conspiracy and weapons possession connected to 28 bombings that occurred, as I say, in northern Illinois in the late 1970s. There are those who are going to come forward today and say they had nothing to do with the bombings. Again, let us reinforce what this is all about. These people were part of a network of individuals who terrorized. They were a terrorist organization. They proudly proclaimed themselves to be part of a terrorist organization.

Ask any American with common sense. Ask any law enforcement agency. They will tell us that it takes more than one person to plant the bomb. It takes more than one person to detonate a bomb. It takes people who steal money to buy explosives and weapons. It takes others to do the planning and activities. To coin a phrase, it takes a village to pull off these operations.

Do we want to set these people free? I think not. If we do, and it seems it is likely, the American people are losers. The victims of these tragedies are losers. The terrorists are the winners.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO).

(Mr. SERRANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I am not even going to try to make an argument against some of the things I have heard here today, because I realize that one of the most difficult things to do here today or this week or this year or any time is to sound like we are speaking on behalf of terrorism. We are not.

As has been stated over and over again, this is an issue of national reconciliation. The fact is that as Puerto Rico faces 101 years of a relationship with the United States, a relationship which started with an invasion in 1898, and has reached the point where Puerto Rico is still not an independent Nation, nor is it a State of the Union, that we will always have these kinds of discussions.

Some people will demonstrate to change that status question. Some people will lobby to change that status question. Some people in the past chose to be part of organizations that chose other methods.

Let me briefly just state the fact that these particular people that we are talking about were not charged with nor were they convicted of any acts of violence. That is a fact. When the President offered the clemency, he and the White House and the government understood that.

What I would like to do today for a couple of minutes is make a plea with the American people, a plea to try for a second, for one moment in our lives, to look beyond the issue as we see it, the issue of violence, the issue of anti-

American sentiment, if that is the case.

I do not mind if Members disagree with us, if they are angry about it. That is fine. But I would like American teachers, I would like American parents, to try to teach our children and to ask ourselves, how did we get to this point? Where is Puerto Rico?

What is the relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States? Are Puerto Ricans American citizens? Yes. Why are they American citizens on the island and not allowed to vote for the President? Why did they serve in all our wars and do not have a voting representative in Congress? What is the relationship?

If we understand that relationship, if we understand that for 101 years Puerto Rico has been a colony in an unequal relationship with the United States, then we will understand that discussions like this one and many others related to this one, nonviolent, very political, in a lobbying form, will continue to take place.

So I would like to take a second to remind us that at the center of this problem is the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. At the center of the solution is the status question. If Puerto Rico either becomes the 51st State of the Union or an independent Nation, and only Congress has the right to do that, then this problem will not continue to exist in this fashion, or exist at all.

It is also interesting to note that some of the people who today support this resolution were here in 1979 when President Jimmy Carter gave clemency. President Carter in 1979, with the support of people who support this resolution today, gave unconditional clemency to Puerto Ricans who were in prison for attacking the House of Representatives. They came to the gallery and attacked the House of Representatives, and did not deny it. That group also attempted the assassination of President Truman, and they did not deny it. Those individuals supported that clemency at that time without conditions.

It is also interesting to note that those individuals went back to Puerto Rico and today publicly state, years later, publicly state that the only way to solve the status issue is by lobbying Congress and using the political process to make the change. They saw a different way of doing things, and so will everyone else, I believe.

I would like us also to try to understand something; to take a second, and this is not a plea, I am not complaining about my condition, but to understand what the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. Velázquez), the gentleman from Chicago (Mr. GUTIERREZ), and I go through on a daily basis.

I was born in Puerto Rico and raised in New York. I am a member of the United States Congress. I love my country. I served in the military. I would give my life to protect this country. But I also have great love for the

place where I was born. I see that place as my mother. I see this place as my father.

For a long time I have seen my father mistreat my mother. We have to bring that to a conclusion. I know some people will think that is awfully dramatic, but please understand, for a long time I have seen my father mistreating my mother. My mother is Puerto Rico. For 101 years she has been saying, either take me in or let me go. Either take me in or let me go.

I have chosen Congress to make that argument. Some have chosen other ways. But also keep something in mind that history sometimes sees organizations in a different way. Nelson Mandela was seen by his government for 27 years as a terrorist. We saw him as somewhat of a terrorist, and now the world sees him as a hero.

The Irish in Ireland, as part of the peace process, have suggested that so-called terrorists or people who used violence on either side of the issue should be released from prison as part of the peace process. So what is wrong in suggesting that as part of our peace process with the longest colony in the history of the world, 400 years under Spain and 100 years under the United States, the longest serving colony in the world, that as part of a reconciliation to reach a new relationship with that country, that we allow 11 people who are in prison and who were never convicted of a violent act to come home and to integrate themselves back into the society?

Members can disagree with me, and I know I cannot win this argument. But for God's sake, just try to understand what this issue is all about. Try to understand what I go through. Try to understand what other people go through. Maybe we can solve this problem.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ), the former Governor.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address this issue from a little different perspective, because in the first place, I believe, like the supporters of this resolution have stated, that the persons involved, the prisoners, are terrorists. They have tried to impose their political aspirations by force, by terror, and by violence on the people of Puerto Rico, an option that is rejected and has been rejected by over 95 percent of the people of Puerto Rico for the past 40 or 50 years.

The people of Puerto Rico have consistently voted against independence. These people seek to impose independence on the people of Puerto Rico.

□ 1100

One of the avowed purposes of the Armed Forces of National Liberation is precisely to obtain independence for Puerto Rico by means of violence and other acts. The group Armed Forces of National Liberation were involved in over 100 terrorist acts throughout the



United States, particularly in the Chicago area and the New York area and some of them in Puerto Rico, which resulted in the deaths of innocent parties.

In New York in the Fraunces Tavern, four people died and 55 people were injured. In Puerto Rico, a policeman was ambushed and killed. Another group attacked a Navy bus with people who were not armed, and the attackers were armed with submachine guns. They killed two persons and seriously injured nine others.

These are terrorists. People specifically involved have not been convicted for any act of murder or act of violence against another person, because those were not crimes at the times they were convicted. They were tried by 1983.

The Antiterrorist Act was not passed until 1990. There were no acts of murder or violence upon a person that resulted in maiming or incapacitating, debilitating a person were not Federal crimes until 1990. So these persons could not have been indicted by the Federal Government for those reasons.

However, they were part of the organization. They have never denied having been part of the organization that, not only had over 100 bombing incidents, some of which bombs were deactivated, others exploded, and the assaults upon banks and stealing money in Connecticut, the Wells Fargo armed robbery. They confiscated about \$7 million. They went over to Cuba. That money has never been recovered, and that money has most probably been used for other terrorist activities.

From the beginning, the President was presented with three options. One, on conditional release, as requested by people supporting the prisoners, or a denial of the conditional release, or a conditional release as he has decided.

I think that what the President has decided is not only the correct thing, it is a human thing. It is a human thing. It is a right thing to have been done. Because the conditions are that, in order for the clemency to take effect, each one of them have to sign a statement that they are asking for clemency, that they are renouncing violence as a means of obtaining their political purposes, and they will be subject to parole conditions; in other words, they will not be able to meet with each other, to talk with each other, to conspire again. They will be subject to other parole conditions. That is sufficient for protection for this society.

Why are people incarcerated? Why are people in prison? They are in prison for several reasons. First of all, one of them is to punish them for the crime they have committed. The other purpose is to protect society from the criminal elements. The third purpose is to rehabilitate them, give them an opportunity to be rehabilitated.

By giving them clemency under special conditions where they have renounced violence and allow them to reintegrate themselves in society under

controlled conditions, then we can see if they really mean to have renounced violence for their purposes and we can see that they can be reintegrated back into society.

That is why I think the President's position is a responsible one, it is one that we should support. I do not think we should be criticizing the President when, through the process, nobody opposed it. I was one of the few persons that raised my voice against a conditional release. I raised my voice to the President. I raised my voice to the Attorney General. I raised my voice in public. I argued it in public.

Very few other people did that. All of the other people were supporting an unconditional release without any regard to the peace and security of their fellow Puerto Ricans.

I must repeat, these are people who are Puerto Ricans. Some of them were not born in Puerto Rico. Some of them are Puerto Rican because their parents were Puerto Ricans. They lived, most of them, in Chicago or the New York area.

From there, we are trying to impose their will on the people of Puerto Rico who have overwhelming by over 95 percent of the votes rejected independence. So we feel that the action, although it has been severely criticized, is the correct action, and the action should be supported.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this resolution. Mr. Speaker, we have old, unfinished business before this body. We are here to debate a resolution that has not gone through the committee process and ran through the Committee on Rules in the night.

This resolution is factually incorrect, is a mirror of how this Congress and the United States Government has dealt with the political status of Puerto Rico. But that will be debated, and that discussion will take place during general debate.

Why is it that the majority does not want a true discussion on this issue? Because the majority does not want to understand this issue. This is not about terrorism, and we will discuss the true intent of this resolution during general debate.

It has to do a lot with what is going on in New York politics. We are having a Senatorial race in New York. That is the true answer of this question of this resolution that we are debating today.

But the truth is that these individuals, these distinct political prisoners, have been prisoners not once, but twice.

I rise in strong opposition of this, and we will present to my colleagues a historical perspective of the whole issue of the political question of Puerto Rico. We have had time, over 100 years of keeping a colony. That is a violation. That is a violation of the civil rights of the people of Puerto Rico.

It is ironic, it is shameful for this body that does not recognize the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination. My colleagues will bring back to me the fact that last year we were debating the legislation of the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), a legislation that again tried to impose a political decision upon the people of Puerto Rico.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA).

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I will tell my colleagues, I rise in strong support of this concurrent resolution. Congress absolutely must speak out definitively on this subject.

It is incomprehensible to me that the administration would actually offer to release these convicted felons associated with the FALN members, and nobody denies these are terrorists. They have now, I am told, accepted the clemency proposal and have, in return, promised to denounce violence. Does anyone believe that?

Since when do we take the word of terrorists who have been asserting yet again that they will become terrorists and they will carry through? In any case, the terrorists did not renounce until 3 weeks after the offer and only after, and it has been discussed here earlier, that this has become a partisan political issue. I do not think it is, but the administration has made it a partisan political issue. As far as the terrorists are concerned, they only renounced terrorism after it became a political issue in the Senate campaign in New York.

I am really shocked by this whole thing. I do not know why in the world anyone would think that the Congress should not speak out on this subject. Terrorists who commit murder or sponsor other murderers should expect to spend the rest of their lives behind bars.

This clemency offer sends the entirely wrong message around the world, around the world, not only here. It totally distorts the law. It invites and incites terrorists, not only in the U.S., but in other parts of the world. Fundamentally, it violates the rule of law and order in a democratic society.

I ask my colleagues to please support strongly this resolution.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution. I think that the resolution is just not founded on facts. I believe I have good knowledge of why the President of the United States offered clemency.

The President of the United States had not offered clemency because a group of politicians got together one day and decided to go down there and ask him for clemency for these 15 Puerto Rican political prisoners. He did so because he believes in peace and a reconciliation, and he believes that the rule of law is based upon justice and to



look and to examine the facts in an impartial manner.

I believe the President of the United States acted correctly when he listened to the petition and responded to that petition.

Now, people would like to think, and of course the discourse has been much about who did what for whom and why. Well, let me come here to try to explain why I believe the President acted and acted correctly. The President looked at this issue and said, there are 10 Nobel Peace Prize winners who have petitioned me, the President of the United States, for this release.

Among those 10 Nobel Peace Prize winners was Desmond Tutu; Coretta Scott King, the widow of Reverend Martin Luther King. Among those 10 Nobel Peace Prize winners was a former President of the United States, Jimmy Carter. That is a lot of different people coming together and saying to the President of the United States,

In the spirit of peace and reconciliation, and as you view Puerto Rico's relationship with the United States, we ask you to initiate a new dialogue, a dialogue based upon peace. And you cannot have peace without justice.

They said to the President of the United States, let them go and allow them to return home.

Now, the question of violence, which is an issue which continues to get debate here, let us make it clear, and I would like to just read from the New York Daily News, an article written by Juan Gonzalez, and it says,

In a statement the prisoners issued in early 1997 when they acknowledged with a sense of self-criticism that the FALN's war of independence had produced innocent victims on all sides and pledged, if released, to participate in the democratic process.

That is about peace and reconciliation.

I would like the American people to understand one other thing, that we also have to have the convictions of our own morals. We have gone out to Ireland, and we have set a course and help set a course for peace there. We have gone to the Middle East, and we have gone to set a course for peace in the Middle East.

We have gone throughout the world to bring about peace. In that peace process, we must close the past and close those chapters and begin a new chapter. So based upon a process of reconciliation, of bringing people together, we had hoped that the President would take action.

I want to make absolutely clear to everybody here that the 11 that have accepted the President's conditions, none of them, none of them were ever charged and/or convicted of any charge which caused the death or human hurt upon any individual. None of them. None of them. That is clearly the record. That clearly is the record.

Now, my heart goes out, as I know all of our hearts go out, to all innocent victims of violence. We want to end the vicious cycle of violence, and the Presi-

dent of the United States has taken a courageous step. I would hope that, and I am not going to ask for this to be entered into the RECORD, but we could read a Requiem en Cerro Maravilla, a Requiem en Cerro Maravilla, which will indicate to all that violence has two faces in this nature, that there has been violence from both sides.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and I and 10 Noble Peace Prize winners, including the Arch Bishop of San Juan and the Cardinal of New York, is asking everybody to come together in peace and reconciliation. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us and bring peace to all.

□ 1115

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON).

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I want to respond to the gentlewoman from New York who said this is about New York politics. Well, I am not from New York; I am from Arkansas. And generally people from Arkansas do not dabble in New York politics. I believe that this happens to be about issues of law enforcement, about issues of safety, and about issues of justice. And as a former federal prosecutor, I look at it from that context.

I am concerned about the President and his anticipated action in this regard. Clearly, the President has the constitutional authority to grant clemency, but I believe it is the responsibility of this Congress to express itself on this issue. In this case there are 16 individuals who have been given a conditional grant of clemency. These individuals are principals and leaders of the Armed Forces of National Liberation, or the FALN. They have launched a terror campaign; 130 bombings, killing six people.

Clearly, as has been pointed out, these individuals were not prosecuted specifically for those acts, but they went through the criminal justice system; and they received a certain number of years, of which they have not completed their service yet. So in this case the individuals went through the criminal justice system; and the system worked through the jury, through the judge, and now through the prison system.

I think there are a number of problems granting clemency in this case. First of all, clemency is rarely granted; three out of 3,000 requests. It is a rarely used remedy. In this case clemency is argued as an act of compassion and mercy, and that is an appropriate use of clemency when it does not undermine legitimate law enforcement functions, when it does not undermine our fight against terrorism, when it does not undermine those people who have trusted the system to achieve justice.

And I believe clemency in this case would undermine those lofty objectives.

And then, thirdly, I believe that a problem with this clemency is that there is not sufficient expression of remorse, contrition, and sorrow. Now, certainly people may say, well, they have indicated they will not engage in violence in the future. Well, I think that everyone would agree that they would make that promise, but there is no guarantee that that promise will be effective tomorrow, the next day, or 10 years from now. So I would ask support for this resolution.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT).

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I support the rule; I support the resolution. Twelve terrorists from Puerto Rico involved in 130 bombings in America, six Americans were killed, dozens more wounded, families fractured, and we are sort of setting a whole new policy on terrorism in America with this clemency act. It is very simple to understand: if an individual is a terrorist and they bomb and kill in America, if they promise never to do it again, to cross their hearts or swear on their mothers they are never going to do it again, apologize for their terrorist bombings and killings, that they will be pardoned. Beam me up.

I do not care what country they are from, what nationality they are. If they are a terrorist and they kill Americans, by God, they will get the wrath of Uncle Sam and not a damned pardon. And that is what we should be saying today in the Congress of the United States.

Now, I am not going to cast any aspersions on the whys of this action and question the President's judgment. All I will say is I disagree with that judgment. I think it is wrong. I think it is dangerous. An America that pardons terrorists who bomb and kill and murder our people is an America that invites more terrorists and invites more terrorism. Period.

I support the rule, I support the resolution and, by God, I hope we never get another clemency decision like this again.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BONILLA).

(Mr. BONILLA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule and of this resolution. This bill's message is fundamentally simple: political violence is unacceptable in a democracy. There must be no compromise with terrorists.

My colleagues, the eyes of the world are on us today. An assortment of jackals and thugs are watching. Osama bin Laden, watching from his home in the mountains of Afghanistan; Terry Nichols and Ted Kaczynski from their cells

in federal prisons, all of these people are watching. They are waiting to see if America has the strength of its convictions. They are waiting to see if the President will succeed in raising the white flag in the war against terrorism. My colleagues it is up to us to disappoint this coalition of evil. It is up to us to uphold our commitment to the rule of law and justice.

This is not a partisan issue, and this is not an issue about race. Good people from all ethnic groups in this country denounce violence and support strongly law and order in this country. This is about our commitment to democratic principles in the face of terror. Senator MOYNIHAN spoke up eloquently when he joined our cause and made it clear that this offer of clemency is wrong. The First Lady has acknowledged that political gain cannot justify such a serious abandonment of law enforcement principles.

My colleagues, let us not forget that another set of eyes are watching us as well. These are the victims of terror, the jurisdiction who are with us, the survivors who lost their loved ones, and the victims who are watching us from above. Let us not tell them that we are abandoning them now because of political expediency. Our decision today should be open and shut. Please join me in reaffirming the American leadership in the war against terror. Please join me in reaffirming our commitment to justice. Let us slam the door that the President has opened for terrorists. Please join me in standing up to terrorism and supporting this rule and this resolution.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, would you be kind enough to inform my dear friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS), and myself of the remaining time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY) has 8½ minutes, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) has 9½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST).

(Mr. FROST asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise as one of the 435 Members of the House of Representatives who oppose terrorism. I will vote for this motion even as I make clear that none of us condones acts of violence committed against the people of the United States.

But, Mr. Speaker, none of us should condone the transparent political charade being put on by the Republican leadership here today. The Republican leadership refuses to allow this House to pass a bipartisan HMO reform bill. Doctors and patients support it, Democrats, and as many as 20 rank-and-file Republicans have supported it. But the insurance companies and big HMOs do not want it, so the Republicans cannot find time to let us pass a real patients'

bill of rights. Neither can the Republican leadership find the time to allow the House to raise the minimum wage for working families. They cannot even find the time to send to the President the centerpiece of the Republican agenda, the huge tax plan that would risk Medicare and prevent us from paying down the debt.

But the Republican leadership is turning procedural handstands to make time for this vote today. Why? For the same reasons this Republican Congress does almost everything it does. First, because Republicans think this vote will provide them with the raw material for 30-second attack ads next year. And, secondly, because the Republicans are solely concerned with providing red meat for the right wing that remains obsessed with the President.

Mr. Speaker, the American people know that the House of Representatives opposes this terrorism, but the American people are also beginning to see that this Republican Congress will do everything it can to protect its special interest supporters and prevent Democrats from addressing America's real priorities.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I hold no brief for terrorism. I hold no brief for the actions of the FALN. I do not think arguments about the status of Puerto Rico, whether it is a colony or not, are relevant to this discussion. Whether Puerto Rico is a colony or not does not justify people to engage in armed revolt. All of that is irrelevant.

What is relevant, and what I want to talk about for a moment, is the rule of law. The rule of law says an individual should be sentenced by the court for the crimes they are convicted of. The rule of law says that people convicted of the same crimes, more or less, should be sentenced to more or less the same sentences. The rule of law says that before the Congress passes resolutions commenting on a particular criminal case it should know the facts and should hold hearings first and then have the resolution, not the other way around.

This resolution, frankly, is an outrage. It borders on a bill of attainder. Technically it is not, but it borders on it. This bill makes many questionable statements of fact: "Whereas the Federal Bureau of Prisons reportedly based its decision in part on the existence of audio recordings indicating that some of the 16 have vowed to resume their violent activities upon release from prison." Well, are those audio recordings in existence or not? Certainly makes a difference. Reportedly? We do not know. Let us have a hearing and find out first before we do this.

"Whereas the release of terrorists is an affront to the rule of law." These people were not condemned as terrorists. They were condemned for the crimes of seditious conspiracy and weapons possession. I am told that the

normal sentence for those crimes is about 10 years. They were sentenced to 90 years.

The contention is made that they were sentenced to lengths of time far in excess of what people normally convicted of these crimes are sentenced to. Remember, they were not convicted of bombing anybody, planning to bomb anybody, murdering anybody. If they did it, they got away with it because that could not be proved. Maybe somebody else did it. They have to be judged and sentenced and treated on the basis of what they were convicted of. That is the rule of law.

If the President believed that the interest of justice called for clemency because they had been sentenced far in excess of the normal sentence for their crimes for which they were convicted, that is his privilege as President to make that decision. It is all our privileges to agree or disagree and to criticize him severely as individuals. Congress, to my knowledge, has never passed a resolution condemning the exercise of the pardon or commutation power of a president. Congress did not pass a resolution condemning President Ford for pardoning President Nixon for any crimes he may have committed. Congress did not pass a resolution condemning President Bush for pardoning Secretary of Defense Weinberger 12 days before he was to go on trial for multiple felony indictments.

It is wrong for Congress to intrude itself in an individual case. Congress was right not to get into that. Many people were very critical of those presidents, and maybe they were right to be critical. And maybe people are right to be very critical of President Clinton for this. But it is wrong for Congress to pass a resolution on an individual criminal case, and on the exercise by the President of his clemency or pardoning power. And it is certainly wrong to do so before we have the facts and before we have the hearings.

This resolution, for instance, says, "Whereas the State Department in 1998 reiterated two long-term tenants," I assume that should be tenets, not landlord-tenants, "of counterterrorism policy that the United States will make no concessions to terrorists and strike no deals; and bring terrorists to justice for their crimes," as well. What that means is that we do not make concessions in negotiations with terrorists before we catch them and try them and punish them. It does not mean that we do not commute a sentence 20 years later.

These people have served 16, 18 years in jail. If people are normally sentenced to 10 or 15 years for the crimes these people were convicted of, that is what they should serve. It is not being soft on anybody. On terrorists? These people were not convicted of terrorism. We should adhere to the elementary rule of law that individuals should be convicted and should serve the time that the sentencing commission guidelines and the law says is appropriate

for the crime an individual is convicted of.

The President says these people were sentenced way beyond what people convicted of their crimes normally are. If he is right, if that is correct, then he was justified in his clemency. If he is not correct, then he was not. We do not have the facts, and we should adhere to the rule of law and not pass a resolution intruding into the criminal justice process, as Congress has never done before in the history of this country.

□ 1130

We should not set such a precedent. Let us individually criticize the President if we think it justified. But Congress should not overstep its bounds. And if it were going to, it should have the hearings and get all the facts first, not act on the basis of political gamesmanship.

Let me say one other thing. The motivation for this: Twenty minutes of debate on each side, no amendments, no hearings, no committee action. Why is this being rushed? For political reasons, to embarrass the President and the First Lady, who is considering running for the Senate in New York.

It demeans the Congress to act on this political basis. I do not think this had anything to do with the campaign, and I do not even want to talk about that. But the fact is that is why action is being rushed. That is why we are doing this resolution before we do hearings and find out what really happened, find out what the facts really are, come in and say what does the statute say, what are the sentencing guidelines, what are other people convicted for these similar crimes sentenced to, what are the normal lengths of time served, what are the circumstances, why did the President recommend this? And then we can make an intelligent judgment, not in haste.

We did not hear about this resolution until yesterday. No committee action. No committee consideration. No hearings. No facts. Just jumped to conclusions.

We heard a lot on this floor last year and in the Committee on the Judiciary about the rule of law. This makes a mockery of it.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA).

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Let me again try to shift the focus back to what this is all about. It is sending a clear and convincing signal to terrorists around the world or right here on American soil that there is no place for terrorism in an American democracy to protect the innocent and the law abiding because too many people have died already.

There are those who have brought up that this is an issue of Puerto Rican political status. Well, for those who do not know, the people of Puerto Rico have had an opportunity to express themselves through plebiscites.

In the most recent plebiscite, the people of Puerto Rico have had three options: to maintain the commonwealth status, to seek statehood, or to seek independence for a free and independent Puerto Rico.

Less than three percent of the people of Puerto Rico chose independence. And that is exactly what the FALN espouses and continues to espouse and those who support release of the FALN prisoners seek to espouse.

So in a democracy, what we do is we vote; and if we do not get our way, we move on and we live under the rules of law. We do not go out and bomb innocent people.

To draw an analogy, Staten Island voted to secede several years ago from New York City. The people of Staten Island, 65 percent overwhelmingly, to secede New York City. Well, through some maneuverings, we were unable to do that. Does that mean we go out and bomb Fraunces Tavern in downtown Manhattan or bomb the Federal building or bomb Police Plaza? No. We move on.

The U.S. Attorneys Office, the woman who prosecuted these individuals in Illinois, was quoted recently in a letter to the editor in the Wall Street Journal. She wrote strongly opposing the clemency petition. She recently said that in the first prosecution, some of these petitioners were caught in the back of a van stocked with weapons to be used to commit armed robberies to fund the FALN operations.

In a second prosecution, three of the terrorists were caught on videotape in safe-houses making bombs that they were planning to plant in military installations.

This is not violent behavior? This is not terrorism?

In this House there are bullet holes, evidence of FALN activities. Those people convicted were released. The FALN prisoners were released and granted clemency. After they were released, the FALN continued on a barrage of terrorism, 139 bombs.

What type of signal do we send releasing those prisoners and then be forced to watch innocent people die by the same group or part of the same group of FALN? Have we not gotten the message? Have we not learned?

Let us talk about some of the people we are talking about here. In 1981, Ricardo Jimenez, who was released, had the following exchange with the judge in his sentencing proceeding: "If it could be a death penalty, I'd impose the death penalty without any hesitation," the judge told Jimenez, who replied, "You can give me the death penalty. You can kill me."

Carmen Valentine, who accepted the President's offer of clemency, threatened the same judge: "You are lucky that we cannot take you right now." She then proceeded to call the judge a terrorist and said that only the chains around her waist and wrists prevented her from doing what she would like to do, to kill him. That is in the UPI, 1981.

Alicia Rodriguez, Luis Rosa and Carlos Torres say they have nothing to be sorry for and have no intentions of an armed revolution. That was in 1995, 4 years ago.

Luis Rosa, in response to why the FALN bombed a suburban shopping mall, retail stores, banks, and the headquarters of a large U.S. corporation, where anybody's children could be, where anybody's parents could be, where anybody's grandparents could be, this was his exchange: "They all had interests in Puerto Rico. We were attacking them in their pocketbooks. Capitalists understand it more when they feel it in their pocketbooks. We were retaliating for their dealings on the island and, hopefully, getting them to leave the island."

Remember the words, "we were attacking." This was a group. This was a disgrace.

Support this rule. Support this resolution. Let us not tolerate terrorists here on our soil.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I opposed the rule considered today as House Resolution 281. The clemency for 16 members of the FALN is a serious matter and deserves serious debate. If Congress acts in such matters by passing a resolution, that resolution should be as carefully drawn as possible—and it certainly should reflect the views and input of Members of this House.

However, under House Resolution 281, we are to consider the sense of Congress resolution offered by Mr. FOSSELLA under a truncated procedure designed for non-controversial matters. Under House Resolution 281 we are to consider Mr. FOSSELLA's proposal without the possibility of offering amendments. Clearly this is an important and controversial matter and the House should consider it under procedures that allow Members of the House to propose amendments.

Second, it appears that House Resolution 281 allowed the House to bypass the committee process. A committee hearing and markup should have been held prior to the consideration of Mr. FOSSELLA's resolution, so that the measure presented to the House would have reflected the deliberative process. Such a markup or hearing could have been held yesterday. That might have required suspending the committee rules; of course, we are being asked to suspend the rules of the House today.

In sum, House Resolution 281 provided for an inadequate procedure to deal with this important issue. We should expect better of the House leadership, and the country certainly expects better of us.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this fair rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 253, nays 172, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 397]

YEAS—253

Aderholt	Ganske	Nethercutt
Archer	Gekas	Ney
Armey	Gibbons	Northup
Bachus	Gilchrest	Norwood
Baker	Gillmor	Nussle
Ballenger	Gilman	Ose
Barcia	Goode	Oxley
Barr	Goodlatte	Packard
Barrett (NE)	Goodling	Paul
Bartlett	Goss	Pease
Barton	Graham	Peterson (PA)
Bass	Granger	Petri
Bateman	Green (WI)	Phelps
Bentsen	Greenwood	Pickering
Bereuter	Gutknecht	Pickett
Berkley	Hall (TX)	Pitts
Biggert	Hansen	Pombo
Billbray	Hastings (WA)	Porter
Bilirakis	Hayes	Portman
Blagojevich	Hayworth	Quinn
Bliley	Hefley	Radanovich
Blunt	Herger	Ramstad
Boehrlert	Hill (MT)	Regula
Boehner	Hilleary	Reynolds
Bonilla	Hobson	Riley
Bono	Hoekstra	Roemer
Boucher	Horn	Rogers
Brady (TX)	Hostettler	Rohrabacher
Bryant	Houghton	Ros-Lehtinen
Burr	Hulshof	Roukema
Burton	Hunter	Royce
Buyer	Hutchinson	Ryan (WI)
Callahan	Hyde	Ryun (KS)
Calvert	Inslee	Salmon
Camp	Isakson	Sandlin
Campbell	Istook	Sanford
Canady	Jenkins	Saxton
Cannon	John	Scarborough
Castle	Johnson (CT)	Schaffer
Chabot	Johnson, Sam	Sensenbrenner
Chambliss	Jones (NC)	Sessions
Chenoweth	Kasich	Shadegg
Clement	Kelly	Shaw
Coble	Kennedy	Shays
Coburn	Kind (WI)	Sherwood
Collins	King (NY)	Shimkus
Combest	Kingston	Shows
Cook	Klecza	Shuster
Cooksey	Knollenberg	Simpson
Cox	Kolbe	Sisisky
Crane	Kuykendall	Skeen
Cubin	LaHood	Skelton
Cunningham	Largent	Smith (MI)
Danner	Latham	Smith (NJ)
Davis (VA)	LaTourette	Smith (TX)
Deal	Lazio	Souder
DeLay	Leach	Spence
DeMint	Lewis (CA)	Stearns
Diaz-Balart	Lewis (KY)	Stenholm
Dickey	Linder	Stump
Doggett	Lipinski	Stupak
Doolittle	LoBiondo	Sweeney
Dreier	Lucas (KY)	Talent
Duncan	Lucas (OK)	Tancredo
Dunn	Luther	Tauzin
Ehlers	Manzullo	Taylor (MS)
Ehrlich	McCollum	Taylor (NC)
Emerson	McCrery	Terry
English	McHugh	Thomas
Etheridge	McInnis	Thornberry
Everett	McIntyre	Thune
Ewing	McKeon	Tiahrt
Fletcher	Metcalf	Toomey
Foley	Mica	Traficant
Forbes	Miller (FL)	Turner
Fossella	Miller, Gary	Upton
Fowler	Mollohan	Vitter
Franks (NJ)	Moore	Walden
Frelinghuysen	Moran (KS)	Walsh
Frost	Morella	Wamp
Galleghy	Myrick	Watkins

Watts (OK)  
Weldon (FL)  
Weldon (PA)  
Weller

Whitfield  
Wicker  
Wilson  
Wise

Wolf  
Young (FL)

NAYS—172

Abercrombie	Green (TX)	Nadler
Ackerman	Gutierrez	Napolitano
Allen	Hall (OH)	Neal
Andrews	Hastings (FL)	Oberstar
Baird	Hill (IN)	Obey
Baldacci	Hilliard	Olver
Baldwin	Hinchey	Ortiz
Barrett (WI)	Hinojosa	Owens
Becerra	Hoeffel	Pallone
Berman	Holden	Pascrell
Bishop	Holt	Pastor
Blumenauer	Hooley	Payne
Bonior	Hoyer	Pelosi
Borski	Jackson (IL)	Peterson (MN)
Boswell	Jackson-Lee	Pomeroy
Boyd	(TX)	Price (NC)
Brady (PA)	Jefferson	Rahall
Brown (FL)	Johnson, E.B.	Reyes
Brown (OH)	Jones (OH)	Rivers
Capps	Kanjorski	Rodriguez
Capuano	Kaptur	Rothman
Cardin	Kildee	Roybal-Allard
Carson	Kilpatrick	Rush
Clay	Klink	Sabo
Clayton	Kucinich	Sanchez
Clyburn	LaFalce	Sanders
Condit	Lampson	Sawyer
Conyers	Lantos	Schakowsky
Costello	Larson	Scott
Coyne	Lee	Serrano
Cramer	Levin	Sherman
Crowley	Lewis (GA)	Slaughter
Cummings	Lofgren	Smith (WA)
Davis (FL)	Lowey	Snyder
Davis (IL)	Maloney (CT)	Spratt
DeFazio	Maloney (NY)	Stabenow
DeGette	Markey	Stark
DeLaHunt	Martinez	Strickland
DeLauro	Mascara	Tanner
Deutsch	Matsui	Tauscher
Dicks	McCarthy (MO)	Thompson (CA)
Dingell	McCarthy (NY)	Thompson (MS)
Dixon	McDermott	Thurman
Dooley	McGovern	Tierney
Doyle	McKinney	Udall (CO)
Edwards	McNulty	Udall (NM)
Engel	Meehan	Velazquez
Eshoo	Meek (FL)	Vento
Evans	Meeks (NY)	Visclosky
Farr	Menendez	Waters
Fattah	Millender-	Watt (NC)
Filner	McDonald	Waxman
Ford	Miller, George	Weiner
Frank (MA)	Minge	Wexler
Gejdenson	Mink	Weygand
Gephardt	Moakley	Woolsey
Gonzalez	Moran (VA)	Wu
Gordon	Murtha	Wynn

NOT VOTING—8

Berry	Rangel	Towns
McIntosh	Rogan	Young (AK)
Pryce (OH)	Sununu	

□ 1158

Messrs. EVANS, EDWARDS and COSTELLO changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. PHELPS changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES ON AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 1402, CONSOLIDATION OF MILK MARKETING ORDERS

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, a "dear colleague" letter will be delivered to each Member's office today notifying them of the plan by the Committee on Rules to meet the week of

September 13 to grant a rule which may limit the amendment process on H.R. 1402, Consolidation of Milk Marketing Orders.

Any Member who wishes to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies and a brief explanation of the amendment by 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 14, to the Committee on Rules in Room H-312 in the Capitol. Amendments should be drafted to the text of the bill as reported by the Committee on Agriculture.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are properly drafted and should check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain their amendments comply with the Rules of the House.

□ 1200

#### REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1621

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1621.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

#### EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD NOT HAVE GRANTED CLEMENCY TO TERRORISTS

Mr. PEASE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 180) expressing the sense of Congress that the President should not have granted clemency to terrorists, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 180

*Whereas the Armed Forces of National Liberation (the FALN) is a militant terrorist organization that claims responsibility for the bombings of approximately 130 civilian, political, and military sites throughout the United States;*

*Whereas its reign of terror resulted in 6 deaths and the permanent maiming of dozens of others, including law enforcement officials;*

*Whereas 16 members of the FALN were tried for numerous felonies against the United States, including seditious conspiracy;*

*Whereas at their trials, none of the 16 defendants contested any of the evidence presented by the United States;*

*Whereas at their trials, none expressed remorse for their actions;*

*Whereas all were subsequently convicted and sentenced to prison for terms up to 90 years;*

*Whereas not a single act of terrorism has been attributed to the FALN since the imprisonment of the 16 terrorists;*

*Whereas no petitions for clemency were made by these terrorists, but other persons, in an irregular procedure, sought such clemency for them;*

*Whereas on August 11, 1999, President William Jefferson Clinton offered clemency to these 16 terrorists, all of whom have served less than 20 years in prison;*

*Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and 2 United States Attorneys all reportedly advised the President not to grant leniency to the 16 terrorists;*

*Whereas the Federal Bureau of Prisons reportedly based its decision in part on the existence of audio recordings indicating that some of the 16 have vowed to resume their violent activities upon release from prison;*

*Whereas the State Department in 1998 reiterated two longstanding tenets of counterterrorism policy that the United States will: "(1) make no concessions to terrorists and strike no deals; and "(2) bring terrorists to justice for their crimes";*

*Whereas the President's offer of clemency to the FALN terrorists violates longstanding tenets of United States counterterrorism policy;*

*Whereas the President's decision sends an unmistakable message to terrorists that the United States does not punish terrorists in a severe manner, making terrorism more likely; and*

*Whereas the release of terrorists is an affront to the rule of law, the victims and their families, and every American who believes that violent acts must be punished to the fullest extent of the law: Now, therefore, be it*

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that making concessions to terrorists is deplorable and that President Clinton should not have offered or granted clemency to the FALN terrorists.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PEASE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PEASE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PEASE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 180, the concurrent resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. PEASE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA), and I ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to control the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this House is about to vote on a resolution that I believe will simply allow Members in this House to send a clear and convincing signal to terrorists around this Nation, around this world contemplating acts of terrorism, that the United States has a zero tolerance policy towards terrorists.

The background for this is the group known as the FALN, a terrorist organization that wreaked havoc across this country in the 1970s and 1980s, and claimed responsibility for 130 bombings, killing innocent people, maiming innocent people across this country from New York to Chicago. Too many families were left without fathers. Too many families were left without husbands. Too many communities were left without, innocent people who died as a result of FALN activities.

Mr. Speaker, those people are rightfully convicted and sentenced to pris-

on, and now the White House wants to release some of these people back into society. This is the absolutely wrong signal we could be sending to the American people, absolutely wrong to terrorists contemplating acts of violence. And in the goodness of the Members here, can we at least vindicate the memory of the Berger family, of Officers Richard Pascarella who lost his eye, or Rocco Pastorella who lost a leg as a result of FALN activities?

We should be sending a convincing signal that there is no place in American society for all of this. That is why the FBI, the Bureau of Prisons, the U.S. Attorneys Office in Connecticut and Illinois that prosecuted these criminals recommended against clemency, and it has also been stated by someone that the supporters of this clemency included John Cardinal O'Connor from New York. In the New York Post, the top aid to John Cardinal O'Connor said yesterday the Archbishop of New York never backed clemency for FALN terrorists despite White House claims that he did. So just to correct the RECORD, I know some who are under the misimpression that he did.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage every Member of this body to understand who we are talking about. We are talking about people who believe themselves to be freedom fighters; but at the root of it, they believe that we can replace the rule of law if they do not get their way and bomb buildings, bomb restaurants, bomb office buildings in order to achieve their goals, and as a result we have experienced what that means. Innocent people lose their lives.

Think about Oklahoma City bombing, think about the World Trade Center bombing, think about 10 or 15 years if we were to let Terry Nichols free because he was nowhere near the bomb scene. I think the American people would be outraged, and well they should.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to what is clearly a politically motivated and totally senseless resolution.

We are a Nation of laws, and if any matter is abundantly clear by our Constitution, it is that the President has the sole and unitary power to grant clemency. Is there any Member that does not understand that? Every President has the sole and unitary power to grant clemency.

For the first time in American history, the House of Representatives, under our present leadership, has determined that we should have a vote to determine whether clemency should be granted or whether the President is doing the same or doing the right thing from their point of view. Now the reason that he has the power to grant clemency is that it is that the Presi-

dent is uniquely positioned to consider the law and the facts that apply in each request for clemency.

Despite this long and uninterrupted history of congressional nonintervention through both Democratic and Republican Presidents, today the Republican Congress tells us that we have an emergency on our hands, an emergency. This matter has not even gone through the Committee on the Judiciary. It arrives here on the Floor after a lot of talk over the media over the weekend. We have an emergency on our hands that requires that we stop all of our legislative business so that we can express our opinion on a clemency that he has already granted.

Mr. Speaker, the majority is forcing us to vote on this phony emergency at the same time that our Nation faces serious economic and social issues which should be requiring our immediate attention. Thirteen children killed each day in this country by handguns, and yet the majority does nothing about gun safety; millions of Americans face serious health care insurance problems, and yet we do nothing about the Patients' Bill of Rights; billions of dollars of special interest money corrupting our political system, and yet the majority continues to ignore campaign finance reform.

The real reason that we are voting on this emergency resolution today is because the majority is looking to score some cheap political points. How sad. They were so eager to begin pointing the political finger that they skipped the normal hearings and markup as well as the floor process that this measure would require or that any measure would require that comes before the floor for disposition.

Now of course, if anyone would bother to look at the actual record, they would see that the clemency was justified and appropriate.

First off, the clemency is not absolute. It is conditional, and it is so conditional that it is really a parole. This is parole for life. The President attached several important serious conditions to the grant of clemency, any violations of which would immediately result in the revocation of the commutation. One condition was that the offenders had to renounce the use and advocacy of violence. Some inmates do not receive clemency because they declined to sign the pledge to renounce violence. Another condition restricted the grantees' freedom of travel and association. The grantees, even those related to one another, can no longer associate with each other.

Finally, the inmates received excessive sentences and have served terms far longer than comparable offenders. The individuals in question have served some 20 years in prison for nonviolent offenses. Although they possessed weapons, no one was harmed. Ultimately no person, no single person, was harmed. So this is far longer than average for most violent offenses. The reason they received such harsh sentences

was because they received consecutive sentences for various offenses even though almost all defendants who were prosecuted for multiple crimes received concurrent sentences.

So the resolution before us today is a tawdry one, a sham one, an embarrassing one, an insult to our Constitution and the Puerto Rican people who care so deeply about the clemency issue.

Can we not move forward?

Please vote no on this concurrent resolution before us.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and the purpose of this resolution in part was because the offer of clemency was given just several weeks ago and it was rejected by the prisoner because it appeared that they did not want to agree to the terms and the conditions, and we thought we could at least bring enough public pressure upon the White House to change the mind and rescind the offer.

That is why for those who think it is a partisan thing they have Senator MOYNIHAN, Bill Bradley, Hillary Clinton, all of whom oppose this clemency as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS).

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution because the seriousness of terrorism is a challenge to our national security, and I urge its strong support.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from New York for yielding and I rise in support of this resolution. As most Americans were, I was deeply disturbed to learn that President Clinton would consider granting clemency to 16 members of the FALN terrorism group who were tried and convicted of participating in acts of terror. In an effort to make sense of an otherwise inexplicable decision by the President to offer freedom to these criminals, some have claimed that the President was somehow influenced by political considerations affecting the election aspirations of Mrs. Clinton. But even she has spoken out against the clemency offer. Combating terrorism is one of the highest priorities in protecting our Nation's security—and that means standing firm in our absolute intolerance of acts of terror. We must not send mixed signals to those who wish to wage war by wreaking havoc, triggering chaos and generating terror. Our message—from the President on down—is supposed to be clear and unmistakable: Promote or participate in terrorism and we will find you, punish you and make sure that no leniency is offered to you. With this act of irresponsibility, President Clinton has created a dangerous crack in our wall of resolve—he has broadcast to would-be miscreants and their political promoters that for every rule we can find an exception. We can expect from this a domino effect—as every activist group with an agenda will ratchet up the political pressure in hopes of finding favor with this seemingly easily-influenced President.

What will be next? Is the President planning to grant clemency to Johnathan Pollard, the convicted spy accused of betraying some of this Nation's most important secrets and causing tangible damage to our Nation's security? Those who are lobbying for that outcome have no doubt been cheered by the President's action in the FALN case. There is nothing wrong with political agitation for a cause—this is a free country after all. But when the President of the United States signals that it may be open season for special interests to get their way—even against the best judgments of the senior presidential advisors with expertise on the subject—then there is trouble ahead. The Congress has to speak out with one voice that we reject this type of ad-hoc policy, informed by political or other considerations in violation of our national security interests.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), chairman of the Committee on Government Reform.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I will not take much time, but there has been some disturbing things that have come to my attention in the past couple of days that I think the Members ought to be aware of.

One is that we sent subpoenas to the White House asking the President to give us the rationale for this pardoning exercise he has been involved in with these terrorists; and the second, we sent a subpoena to the Bureau of Prisons asking them for any information or transcripts of telephone calls that may have been made by these convicted terrorists to others that may have indicated that they were still involved or wanted to be involved or were advocating additional terrorist activities.

I was informed that some people at the Justice Department have contacted us and said that the President and the Justice Department may claim executive privilege, and all I want to do is protest that because I think if they claim executive privilege, the American people will be kept in the dark about why these terrorists were pardoned. The President needs to make clear to the American people the reasons why these people were pardoned, number one; and, number two, we need to know if they were making telephone calls from the prisons advocating additional act of terrorism. If they were, they should not be on the streets under any circumstances.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE).

□ 1215

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, this is a sad day in the history of the House of Representatives. This resolution will pass. This resolution will pass overwhelmingly, but it should not be before us today.

When I initially heard the question posed a few weeks or so ago, should terrorists, should convicted terrorists be pardoned, I thought, what is the President doing? But, you know something? We are not talking about convicted ter-

rorists. Not one individual has been convicted of terrorism. Not one individual was indicted for terrorism. So strike the word from our language.

You are saying anybody who we find guilty of terrorism by association with a group. They were convicted of weapons possession; they were convicted of seditious conspiracy. What is seditious conspiracy? That is a desire to have independence for Puerto Rico from the United States.

Might they have been involved in something worse? Might they have been involved in terrorism? It may be, but they were not indicted for it, and they were not convicted of it. So it is inappropriate for us to be talking about that today.

Look at this resolution. The resolution reads, "Whereas, President William Jefferson Clinton offered clemency to these 16 terrorists."

He did not. He offered it to 14, not 16. The resolution is factually incorrect.

"Whereas, the FBI reportedly based its decision." "Reportedly." That means you do not know. You are reading a newspaper and saying, well, they report it, so it must be true.

And what is it that they reportedly based their decision upon? The existence of audio recordings indicating that some of the 16 have vowed to resume their violent activities. What is "some"? Is it one, or is it two, or is it 15, or is it 16 of the 16?

I would urge at least an abstention on this. There is no way that we should rush to judgment on this.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the distinguished majority whip.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I do think it is unfortunate that this debate has become what the definition of terrorism is.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to giving clemency to terrorists. This Nation cannot afford to give the world the impression that we are weak, but that is exactly what pardoning terrorists does. The act of pardoning criminals gives the impression that justice has already been done, but that is not the case.

An old adage says that justice is truth in action. Well, the truth of the matter here is that justice is being perverted. The President does have the sole power to grant clemency, but this House has the responsibility of expressing itself on the actions of the President. Clemency should not simply be given at the irresponsible whim of one leader. It should rest on the perception of justice held by the people.

Terrorism is an attack on the everyday sense of security of a people. Terrorists strike randomly and violently to break the will of governments and their citizens.

Now, dealing harshly with terrorists sends the message that a nation is not willing to suffer attacks on its actual safety or its sense of security. If for no other reason, government exists to protect the people. Pardoning terrorists

abandons the real necessity to deter others from these tactics. After all, what kind of message is sent by pardoning those who use violence against Americans to make political points?

Though no one should be surprised by this action by this President, in fact, this clemency for terrorists should go down as a metaphor for Clinton policy, which has been an ongoing comedy of capitulations.

Let us just look at his litany of failure in foreign policy:

North Korea continues to flaunt international law by speeding ahead with their nuclear program, with no consequences whatsoever.

Afghanistan and Sudan were bombed at the blink of an eye without any success at curtailing the terrorist bin Laden.

Iraq is periodically bombed, without getting any closer to the supposed objective of removing Saddam Hussein from power.

Russia, with its massive nuclear capability, is coming apart at the seams and selling weapons technology to scrape by, and we do nothing.

China is walking all over us, pure and simple.

Mr. Speaker, coddling terrorists shows the world that America is weak, but this simply reinforces the impression already constructed on 6 years of a foreign policy embarrassment.

So, Mr. Speaker, clemency for those who attack America's sense of security is a mistake, and I urge an "aye" vote on this resolution.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, we are debating today a concurrent resolution that states that it is the sense of Congress that "the President should not have granted clemency to terrorists." The resolution uses the word "terrorist" 10 or 15 sometimes.

I have heard the word terrorist used incalculable times during this debate, and I am sure I will continue to hear it throughout the rest of this morning. So I would like to talk about that word and its connection to these people who have been offered clemency, in a way that is a little more accurate, a little more honest, and perhaps a little less driven by politics.

They were convicted of crimes. Specifically they were convicted of weapons possession, car theft and robbery. These are not acts of terrorism. These individuals are not terrorists.

They are also convicted of seditious conspiracy, a political charge, a charge entirely unrelated to violence, a charge virtually never used in America in the second half of the 20th Century.

For these crimes, "crimes," that is an absolutely essential point, crimes in which not one person was seriously injured, crimes which did not cause one person to be killed, not one, they were sentenced to 90 years in prison. Ninety years.

In the late 1980s when they were sentenced, the length of their sentences for these nonviolent crimes was consistently longer than most criminals received for unspeakable acts of violence, more than for assault, for rape or for murder.

Now, we have heard supporters of this resolution talk about very serious acts of violence that were associated with the FALN, of which these people were associated with. These were terrible acts, they were wrong, and I am not here to defend them. As a Puerto Rican and an American, I express my deepest condolences to the victims and their families. Violence such as those acts should not be tolerated. But these were not the acts where these individuals were convicted. This is the plain and simple truth of the situation. That does not excuse what they did, and they have served very long sentences for what they were convicted of.

But for what they were convicted of, and that is the only fair standard in any democracy, they have served long enough. And that is why 10, 10 Nobel Peace prize winners support their release. That is why Coretta Scott King and former President Jimmy Carter and Archbishop Desmond Tutu support their release. That is why an unprecedented international coalition of human rights organizations, of religious, labor and business leaders support their release. That is why the United Council of Churches of Christ, why the United Methodist Church, why the Baptist Peace Fellowship, why the Episcopal Church of Puerto Rico, why the Presbyterians of Puerto Rico, why the Catholic Archbishop of San Juan, support their release.

These are reasonable people I just mentioned, concerned organizations that speak for hundreds of thousands of Americans. They have examined the facts, they have studied the evidence, and they have concluded that these people have served a long enough time for their crimes and they are no longer a danger to our society.

A strong supporter of independence for Puerto Rico, it is with a heavy heart that I think about violence that was associated with this movement long ago, and it is with a heavy heart that I think about the people that were hurt at the time, and it is with a heavy heart that I think about all of the anger and pain that is associated with it. And I hope with a sense of hopeful necessity and fairness and forgiveness that we can all come together and look for peace and reconciliation among the people of Puerto Rico and among the people of this great Nation, as we have done in Ireland and as we have done in the Middle East.

Let us be a leader here at home for peace and reconciliation.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, for those who have a problem with the word "terrorism" or "terrorist," terrorism is defined as the use of violence and threats to intimi-

date or coerce, especially for political purposes.

I would suggest anybody who has a problem with that language to read all of the public documents to demonstrate exactly what these people are.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON).

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, is this debate really about what the definition of terrorism is?

Mr. Speaker, terrorism has become a headline issue all too often. When President Clinton bombed strategic targets in Afghanistan and Sudan last year, he attempted to send a strong message to terrorists that terrorists must pay for their crimes. But on August 11 of this year, President Clinton sent a very different message to terrorists here at home by offering clemency to 16 terrorists.

Much has been said of the political motives of the clemency offer, but this is not the issue. This is an issue of terrorism and victims' rights. What about the countless victims who have been maimed and killed by the FALN bombs and guns?

Yesterday I met with Diana Berger, a constituent from Cherry Hill, New Jersey, who lost her husband in 1975 to these FALN terrorists. What about their rights?

Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone to vote in support of this very important resolution.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE).

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, every person who has thus far spoken on behalf of this resolution has not only used the word "terrorist," but has called these individuals terrorists and has conveyed the impression that these individuals were convicted of terrorism.

That is 100 percent wrong. They were never convicted, they were never accused, they were never indicted. It is weapons possession, or robbery, or car theft, but it is not terrorism. You may not use that word with respect to individuals if they have not been convicted or accused of it.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the people were not convicted of terrorism, because there was no federal statute dealing with terrorism when they were convicted.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA.)

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I totally associate myself with the statements made by our colleague from Staten Island (Mr. FOSSELLA), but I must say, this is incomprehensible that we are nitpicking over whether or not these members,



these people, were not only convicted felons, but openly associated with the FALN. They have publically committed themselves to terrorism. There is no question about that.

However, I want to spend the rest of my time and associate my remarks on this resolution in the name of Joseph and Thomas Connor, who lost their father in an FALN bombing, or, I am sorry, terrorist attack, in New York some years ago.

As they noted in their outspoken opposition to clemency in a Wall Street Journal editorial page article from the Connor brothers, "Not a day passes without our feeling the void left in our lives."

In the name of the Connor brothers and the others who have suffered at the hands of terrorists, we must pass this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the House that the President should not have granted clemency to terrorists. Congress must speak out definitively.

Given the nature and scope of the crimes committed by the FALN, I find it incomprehensible that the Administration would make any offer to release any convicted felons associated with this group. The FALN has a history of violence against innocent civilians and there are indications that members of the group may be contemplating a return to terrorism. To release convicted members of this group in this context would be highly irresponsible.

The FALN members who have accepted clemency have promised to renounce violence in return. Since when do we take the word of terrorists? Terrorists who took 3 weeks after the offer and only after it became a political issue in the Clinton Senate campaign. I, for one, do not take convicted terrorists at their word. The President should not be risking lives on a promise that can be broken so easily. This is a mistake of overwhelming magnitude.

In my Congressional District, this matter is of more than academic interest. On January 24, 1975, the FALN bombed the Fraunces Tavern in New York City, killing four innocent individuals and injuring 53 others. One of those killed was Frank Connor, a Wall Street banker from Fair Lawn, New Jersey.

Mr. Connor was an American success story. The only son of an elevator operator and cleaning lady, he was born and raised in a working class neighborhood, went to a public college and worked his way up from the ground floor to a successful career in business. Mr. Connor was a husband and father. In fact, he was looking forward to a joint birthday party that evening for the ninth and eleventh birthdays of his sons, Joseph and Thomas. He obviously never made it home for that party and those young boys never saw their father alive again.

Today, Joseph and Thomas Connor are Wall Street bankers like their father and have been among the leading opponents of this misguided offer of clemency. I quote from an op-ed article Joseph and Thomas wrote for the Wall Street Journal: "Not a day passes without our feeling the void left in our lives."

In the named of the Connor brothers and others who have suffered at the hands of terrorists we must pass this resolution.

None of the 16 FALN members who have been offered clemency are alleged to have been involved in Mr. Connor's brutal murder. Nonetheless, they were core members of a group that used terror as an instrument of action. The FALN has not engaged in bombings since these terrorists were incarcerated.

Terrorists who commit murder or sponsor murder should expect to spend the rest of their lives behind bars. This clemency offer totally distorts the law; invites terrorists to U.S. action; and violates the fundamentals of a law and order democratic society.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this resolution. You are talking here about violence and terrorism. What about terrorism when you keep Puerto Rico as a colony for over 100 years? For over 100 years all branches of the Federal Government have claimed plenaral or absolute power over Puerto Rico and its people.

□ 1230

How hypocritical it is of us, how embarrassing, that the greatest democracy in the world turns a blind eye to our own condition.

We seek to export democracy to all parts of the world, from Ireland to Kosovo. We celebrate where it takes hold, in South Africa and so much of Eastern Europe. But what about our own backyard? We do not have the integrity to look ourselves in the mirror and ask the difficult question. We do not have the courage to get our own house in order.

Today it is not about whether clemency should be granted, and many of us know it. This is a political issue and many of us know it. The only reason for this resolution is to embarrass the President and the First Lady. All Members need to do is to look at our history.

Allow me to provide some historical perspective which will hit closer to home. In 1979, Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle approved of President Carter's decision to commute the sentence of four Puerto Rican nationalists. Can anyone in this Chamber explain to me what is the difference between the release of four nationalists in 1979 and the release today of these 11 prisoners, political prisoners?

Do Members know what the difference is? It is that in 1979 we were not facing a senatorial race in New York. That is the difference. Not only that, but Members from both sides of the aisle congratulated President Carter for that humanitarian gesture.

The Republican leader at the time, Representative John Rhodes of Arizona, said the following on this very floor on September 7, 1979. I quote: "Mr. Speaker, the action of the Presi-

dent in releasing the prisoners meets my approval. I do think that enough time has elapsed." Those were the words of the Republican leader. In addition, other Republican Members of Congress, Members who are still in this body, expressed similar statements.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the comments made by one of the cosponsors of this resolution, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from Puerto Rico for his statement and for his support of this initiative. I join in commending the President for undertaking this humanitarian gesture.

In like manner, I hope that President Fidel Castro will honor the promises he made to our congressional delegation which visited with him in January of this year, at which time he stated that when the United States undertakes a humanitarian gesture releasing Puerto Rican prisoners, that he would entertain a reciprocal humanitarian gesture and release the American prisoners presently being held in the Cuban jails, some of whom have been imprisoned for as long as 15 years.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from beautiful upstate New York (Mr. SWEENEY).

(Mr. SWEENEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I just want to make one brief point. As a New Yorker who, like many Americans, is outraged at the actions taken here, and really quite confounded by my colleagues on the other side for their statements, what people are outraged about, what my constituents care about, is what appears to be the total disregard for the depth of the issues involved here, the rashness with which the President acted for what appears to be purely political purposes.

Members talk about people raising this issue for a political practice. It was the President who practiced it. We are outraged by it. It threatens the security of all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I, like so many Americans, am outraged that the President has risked undermining the security of the people, in order to score political points with New York's Latin community. There is no way to excuse the release of eleven convicted terrorists. None, whatsoever.

This nation has the most effective system of criminal justice system in the world, because, as a people, we insist on holding criminals accountable for their actions. The American people understand this, they have seen through the ruse that the President has tried to pull on them.

As a former campaign director on many high profile, high stakes elections, and as a candidate myself, I understand the passion involved in wanting to win. But, I also know there are some lines that you just don't cross. The latest action by the President to offer clemency to these terrorists clearly crosses this line.

Mr. Speaker, I want to applaud the leaders of New York's Latin community, especially our colleague from New York, Mr. SERRANO, for putting politics aside and sticking to their beliefs. They could have sat in quiet support of their political ally, the First Lady, but they didn't and I commend them for their honesty.

The political campaign process is intended to strengthen our system of government. But, what the Clinton-Gore campaign machine has done, undermines our judicial system. When the President, the chief enforcer of our laws, weakens this structure by releasing convicted criminals for cheap, political purposes, there is a serious problem. It denigrates American Democracy.

Support the Fosella Resolution!

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO), a former member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

(Mr. SERRANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I think the President did the right thing. As I said before during the rule debate, he did it, or he wanted to do it, actually, right before we had that horrible situation with the impeachment situation. He wanted to do it then as part of the observance, if you will, of the 100th anniversary of the invasion of Puerto Rico by the United States. He wanted to do it as a first step towards a national reconciliation, a national reconciliation which we support in other parts of the world but we do not support here.

We may not like to hear it, but the fact is that Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States. The fact is that since 1898, the American government has held Puerto Rico as a possession. As long as Puerto Rico remains a colony of the United States, we will have demonstrations, we will have lobbying, we will have plebiscites, we will have discussions.

I can almost assure that we will not have these kinds of discussions anymore because the people who came to Congress once and used violence here who were pardoned in 1979, with the support of Members who are still in this Chamber today, those people have renounced all forms of violence and now admit that the way to bring about the change in the political status in Puerto Rico is through the democratic process.

There is no democratic process in Puerto Rico. The 4 million American citizens who live in Puerto Rico do not have the right as an independent Nation to set their tone in the world and find their place, and they cannot vote for the Commander in Chief who has sent them to every war in the past. The people in Puerto Rico cannot send a Member here who has a vote, as I do from New York, to be able to argue these points.

We have to understand that what the President did he did at the request of Cardinal O'Connor from New York, notwithstanding what our local newspaper says. We have, and I tell the gentleman from New York this in case he brings it up, we have the letter from the Cardinal that says that he wants these people out of prison. He did it after people throughout the world said, for national reconciliation, do this. He did it after Members of Congress went to see him. I spent the last 6 years, a lot of hours, working on this issue.

I am not celebrating anything. How can we celebrate when people get out after 20 years in prison? Not one of them, as has been said on this floor, not one were accused or convicted of any violent acts.

So while Members condemn this action, in which I support the President, while Members use the word "terrorism," which scares the American people, and should, why not look also at the larger picture? Is it not about time that we resolve the issue of the status of an island that we invaded in 1898, that we took from Spain; incidentally, an island Spain invaded in 1493?

In closing, very shortly, as I said before, take some time to think about what we go through, we who are Americans and love this country and were born in Puerto Rico; we who serve in Congress and want to solve this problem soon. Think about that. Members might want to take some new action.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, again, the name of the Cardinal O'Connor has been invoked. Of course, we wish him well. He is convalescing. But his statement from Mr. Joe Swilling is that he has not taken a position on this. "I don't expect that he will." For those who have a problem, I guess it comes down to do you believe the Cardinal or do you believe the President. It is ultimately up to the Members here to decide.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY).

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, 45 years ago this year a bullet was fired into this Chamber. It does not matter who fired the bullet, who bought the bullet, who drove the getaway car. They were all involved in terrorism.

The debate today is about terrorism. I have heard a word used, "Phony emergency." They are about to be released. That is why it is an emergency. I hear it has been called a political resolution. Then we are joined by such politicians as Hillary Clinton, Senator Moynahan, and Bill Bradley.

Then we also hear we should be working on social issues in this Chamber. The same people who are using a political club of gun control are willing to release people that use bombs and guns and weapons in destroying families' lives.

Mr. Speaker, we can stop the release of these people, but if we do not, I urge those who have willingly said they

should be released then to invite those terrorists to their districts and allow them to live in their districts. But I do not want them in mine.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANSEN). The Chair will remind all Members to refrain from characterizing the positions of individual Senators on the pending legislation.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from New York for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the tortured reasoning that has been brought forward in this Chamber, trying to muddy the waters.

Let us make it very simple, Mr. Speaker. This has nothing to do with politics or parsing words. This has everything to do with what is just and what is right.

My colleague, the gentleman from New York, spoke of what went on in this Chamber 20 years ago. Let us take that as an object lesson. Clemency and leniency was granted. It did not deter the FALN, that continued a decade-long campaign of terror resulting in bombing, resulting in deaths. I was not in this Chamber, I protested at that time as a private citizen.

But we have this simple question. It is one, Mr. Speaker, we should put to the President of the United States: Are we willing to take as the policy of the government of the United States forgiveness for acts of terror on the flimsy promise that people utter the statement, they will never do it again? We cannot trust the word from the top. We should not trust the words of terrorists.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. Cox).

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, the President is the chief law enforcement officer of the United States. In that capacity he has the power to pardon convicted criminals. I know this from firsthand experience because I worked in the White House counsel's office which, for the President, performs the function of screening pardon applications.

Usually this pardon power is used to wipe the slate clean for convicted criminals after they have served their time and paid their debt to society. President Clinton, for example, has used the pardon power in this way 108 times, but he has only let people out of jail three times before, this despite the fact that thousands of people nationwide ask the President to be freed from the sentences that they have been asked to serve after conviction for serious crimes.

How did the President pluck these terrorist cases from the thousands that have asked him to be released from prison? It is because of Hillary Clinton's Senate campaign in New York. Now she says she opposes the release of

these prisoners from jail. Now that she has changed her mind, Hillary Clinton is right. Vote with Hillary Clinton. Vote yes on this resolution.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI).

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

The gentlewoman from New York said a little bit ago, asked the question, what is the difference between the grant of clemency today and what happened in 1979?

Let me tell the Members the difference. In 1979 we had not experienced two of our embassies being blown up by terrorists. In 1979 we had not experienced the World Trade Center being bombed. In 1979 we had not experienced the Murrah Federal building being bombed. That is the difference.

Today there is no greater threat to the United States of America. There is no army, no foreign army that is a greater threat to the United States than terrorism. That is the threat today, foreign terrorists and domestic terrorists.

That is why this decision, whether it was made for political reasons or personal conscience, I do not care. It does not matter to me what it was. We have talked about what may have motivated the President. It is not significant. It is not relevant.

The fact is that he is making this decision at the worst possible time. It is our responsibility in this House to voice a concern about the fact that terrorism does threaten the United States, today more than ever before.

I have heard words like the resolution is a sham and it is embarrassing. The only thing that is a sham and is embarrassing here is opposition to this resolution, because we are in fact in the most severe situation we have ever faced with regard to terrorism. So therefore to suggest that these people are not terrorists because that is not what they were convicted for, to suggest that we should not be using the word "terrorism" here to describe these people, is something like suggesting that we should not use the word "murderer or thief" to describe Al Capone simply because he was convicted of tax evasion, when we all knew that he was responsible for and guilty of many other crimes. So "terrorism" is the right word, and we should support this resolution.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), a former member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. BECERRA. I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me, Mr. Speaker.

Let us make it clear, violence cannot be tolerated in this country. We must prosecute vigorously anyone who commits violence, including terrorism. We must punish them vigorously as well.

□ 1245

But in this case, we are talking about crimes where the people convicted were not convicted of terrorism. They are not terrorists. They were, in fact, not even convicted of crimes of violence. They have served more time in jail than anyone in this country probably sitting in jail today has served for crimes of similar character, nonviolent crimes.

So what is the issue here? It is guilt by association. Those who vote for this resolution at the end really should be convicted of guilt by association, because what they are doing is they are saying, because they are using the label terrorism for people who are not convicted terrorists, they are trying to make all of us here believe that, if we vote no, we are soft on terrorism.

Timothy McVeigh was convicted. Terry Nichols was convicted. Should we now say that every one of the individuals that they associated with even if they should happen to have racist views should now serve time equal to the time of Timothy McVeigh and Nichols? Of course not. We do not convict people here by guilt from association. But that is what this does.

Today 13 children will die, most of those as a result of someone who has a firearm. Today there are 42 million Americans who do not have insurance and have to run through the risks of life and work without any type of protection in case they get injured or hurt.

This resolution is politically motivated. It will make for a very tough vote for Members. But at the end of the day, let us keep in sight what is really before us. These folks are being granted clemency, not because they are terrorists, but because they have served more time than other individuals in this country will have for the same type of crime.

This vote today has nothing to do with that. It has everything to do with sending out a message playing on people's fears about violence and terrorism and hopefully being able to use this next year in a political campaign commercial to say someone was soft on crime. Shame on us for doing that. Shame on us for doing guilt by association.

It is time for us to do something like giving people insurance, giving people protection from gun violence. Let us get to work and get through with this.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY).

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the resolution offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA).

Though we are a Nation that believes strongly in an individual's right to freedom of expression, we must condemn in the most forceful manner those individuals who work to extend their political expression into violent behavior.

It is well-known now that some have found it proper to offer clemency to

such individuals, despite the best recommendations of the FBI, the Bureau of Prisons, and several U.S. Attorneys.

This uncommon and ill-advised gesture of leniency has baffled many of us. It has appalled many of my colleagues in the New York delegation, and it has apparently confused some of those who aspire to be included in the New York delegation.

The offer of clemency represents a failure to acknowledge the primacy of public safety over politics, and I urge Members of this House to support this resolution condemning it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANSEN). The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of the time to the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ) to conclude our debate on this.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about the people of Puerto Rico in this debate, because it would appear that the people of Puerto Rico would support violence, and they do not. On the contrary, Puerto Ricans love democracy and reject violence as a way of imposing their political ideas.

I have stated publicly that these persons, these prisoners are terrorists. They belong to an organization, the Armed Forces of National Liberation, that was involved in terrorist acts, and they committed acts of terrorism. They conspired to commit, and they supported them, they applauded them, and they financed them.

But a long time has elapsed since they have been in prison. A lot of pressure was put upon the President to release these people unconditionally. I was the lonely voice in Congress that raised the opposition to the unconditional release at that time.

I indicated to the President they should not be released unconditionally; and the conditions that they have imposed upon these people are reasonable conditions that will be imposed on any other criminal.

Their conditions: First of all, they have to ask for clemency. Second, they have to renounce violence for achievement of their political means, political aspirations. Third, they will be subject to all the conditions of parolees, so that they will be under supervision by the parole system. I oppose this resolution because the President has acted reasonably with conscience and also in a humane order.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire about the time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, let us remind everybody why we are here. We are here again to send a signal to anybody contemplating terrorism on American soil that we will not tolerate it because we

regard the value of innocent human life. When our society begins to devalue innocent human life, we begin to head in the wrong direction.

We just heard the distinguished gentleman from Puerto Rico who admits that these people are terrorists. I hope that puts to rest those who still believe that these people are not terrorists.

The FBI, the Bureau of Prisons, the U.S. Attorneys office who found these people making bombs oppose clemency. Anybody with an ounce of common sense will tell us that it takes a network of individuals to perpetrate these crimes against humanity, that kill innocent people, that maim innocent people.

Let us put a face on it. Diana Berger is at home right now. She was 6 months pregnant when her husband was killed. Joseph and Thomas Conner grew up without a father.

These are the people we want to release, Carmen Valentine who accepted the President's offer of clemency, threatened the judge who sentenced her, "You are lucky that we cannot take you right now." She then proceeded to call the judge a terrorist and then said only the chains around her waist and wrists prevented her from doing what she would like to do, to kill him.

Is that the people we want back in society? People who have demonstrated no remorse, have offered no apologies, no contrition for the fact that innocent people have gone?

They consider these people who lost fathers, who lost family members casualties of war. God forbid it is anybody here. God forbid it is anybody at home right now.

Anthony Semft who was blinded when he responded to a bomb, we were asking Anthony, "Why are you so upset?" He said, "I did not think I had a voice. Nobody was speaking for me when the President offered clemency to these people." We are his voice. Now we can send and use that voice for the good of the people, the good of the innocent law-abiding people of this country, or we can take a stand and say, do you know what? We can set these terrorists free.

It is up to the Members of this House. Do we speak for Diana Berger? Do we speak for Officer Richard Pastorella who will never see again? Do we speak for Anthony Semft who believes that he does not have a voice? Or do we say that, do you know what, if you renounce violence, and by the way, some of the people who have offered clemency have not renounced violence or agreed to the terms and conditions, do we want somebody set free who will not even do those things?

Let us remember the power of clemency that we are talking about here exercised three times in 7 years which more than 3,000 people have requested and God knows how many others who want to be set free. If my colleagues are willing, if they are willing to say that anybody in prison who renounces

violence should be set free, then come down here and say it. But if we want to speak for the law-abiding citizens, we should keep these people behind bars where they belong.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member would ask his colleagues to consider carefully the following editorial from the September 8, 1999, edition of the Daily Nebraskan, entitled "Policy Problems—Clemency Move Looks Like Hypocrisy."

Once again, President Clinton did not think his actions through.

In mid-August, Clinton offered clemency to 16 members of a Puerto Rican nationalist group called FALN, which is a Spanish acronym for Armed Forces of National Liberation.

Law enforcement officials blame FALN for at least 130 bombings in the United States and Puerto Rico between 1974 and 1983.

As part of the clemency offer, Clinton gave the 11 men and give women until Friday to renounce political violence and pledge to disassociate with FALN.

The separatists have already served between 14 and 19 years for crimes such as bomb-making and conspiring to commit armed robbery.

When criticized, the White House was quick to point out that the clemency offer was extended to only those "not associated with the more violent acts that led to injuries.

With this offer, Clinton has made an abrupt about-face from the terrorism policy the espoused following the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania last year.

Following those incidents, the United States bombed terrorist training headquarters and launched a manhunt for alleged mastermind Osama bin Laden while Clinton vowed that we would not bow to terrorists.

Now we are going to pardon the terrorists simply because they hail from a U.S. territory?

That is wrong.

Even President Clinton's wife now thinks so.

Speculation abounds that the president offered clemency to this group to help his wife's chances in next year's New York Senate race.

Initially, Hillary Clinton supported clemency, but with a move out of her husband's play book she reversed her position last weekend.

Regardless of the motives, this is simply a bad idea.

The United States should not condone terrorism in any form.

Clemency only reinforces terrorists' actions, and any pledge to renounce violence on their part would hardly be worth the paper it was printed on.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PEASE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 180, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 311, nays 41,

answered "present" 72, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No 398]

YEAS—311

Aderholt	Foley	McCarthy (NY)
Allen	Forbes	McCollum
Andrews	Fossella	McCrery
Archer	Fowler	McHugh
Armey	Franks (NJ)	McInnis
Bachus	Frelinghuysen	McIntosh
Baird	Frost	McIntyre
Baker	Gallegly	McKeon
Baldacci	Ganske	McNulty
Ballenger	Gekas	Metcalf
Barcia	Gibbons	Mica
Barr	Gilchrest	Miller (FL)
Barrett (NE)	Gillmor	Miller, Gary
Barrett (WI)	Gilman	Minge
Bartlett	Gonzalez	Mollohan
Barton	Goode	Moore
Bass	Goodlatte	Moran (KS)
Bateman	Goodling	Morella
Bentsen	Gordon	Murtha
Bereuter	Goss	Myrick
Berkley	Graham	Nethercutt
Biggert	Granger	Ney
Billbray	Green (TX)	Northup
Billakis	Green (WI)	Norwood
Blagojevich	Greenwood	Nussle
Bliley	Gutknecht	Ose
Blunt	Hall (OH)	Oxley
Boehlert	Hall (TX)	Packard
Boehner	Hansen	Paul
Bonilla	Hastert	Pease
Bono	Hastings (WA)	Peterson (PA)
Boswell	Hayes	Petri
Boucher	Hayworth	Phelps
Boyd	Hefley	Pickering
Brady (TX)	Herger	Pickett
Bryant	Hill (IN)	Pitts
Burr	Hill (MT)	Pombo
Burton	Hilleary	Pomeroy
Buyer	Hobson	Porter
Callahan	Hoekstra	Portman
Calvert	Holden	Price (NC)
Camp	Holt	Quinn
Campbell	Horn	Radanovich
Canady	Hostettler	Ramstad
Cannon	Houghton	Regula
Capps	Hulshof	Reynolds
Cardin	Hunter	Riley
Castle	Hutchinson	Roemer
Chabot	Hyde	Rogers
Chambliss	Inslee	Rohrabacher
Chenoweth	Isakson	Ros-Lehtinen
Clement	Istook	Rothman
Coble	Jenkins	Roukema
Coburn	John	Royce
Collins	Johnson (CT)	Ryan (WI)
Combest	Johnson, Sam	Ryun (KS)
Condit	Jones (NC)	Salmon
Cook	Kaptur	Sandlin
Cooksey	Kasich	Sanford
Costello	Kelly	Saxton
Cox	Kennedy	Scarborough
Cramer	Kildee	Schaffer
Crane	Kind (WI)	Sensenbrenner
Cubin	King (NY)	Sessions
Cummings	Kingston	Shadegg
Cunningham	Klecza	Shaw
Danner	Klink	Shays
Davis (FL)	Knollenberg	Sherman
Davis (VA)	Kolbe	Sherwood
Deal	Kuykendall	Shimkus
DeLauro	LaHood	Shows
DeLay	Lampson	Shuster
DeMint	Largent	Simpson
Diaz-Balart	Larson	Sisisky
Dickey	Latham	Skeen
Dicks	LaTourette	Skelton
Doggett	Lazio	Smith (MI)
Dooley	Leach	Smith (NJ)
Doolittle	Levin	Smith (TX)
Doyle	Lewis (CA)	Smith (WA)
Dreier	Lewis (KY)	Souder
Duncan	Linder	Spence
Dunn	Lipinski	Spratt
Edwards	LoBiondo	Stearns
Ehlers	Lowe	Stenholm
Ehrlich	Lucas (KY)	Strickland
Emerson	Lucas (OK)	Stump
English	Luther	Stupak
Etheridge	Maloney (CT)	Sweeney
Evans	Maloney (NY)	Talent
Everett	Manzullo	Tancred
Ewing	Mascara	Tanner
Fletcher	Matsui	Tauzin

Taylor (MS)	Turner	Weldon (PA)
Taylor (NC)	Udall (NM)	Weller
Terry	Upton	Weygand
Thomas	Visclosky	Whitfield
Thompson (CA)	Vitter	Wicker
Thornberry	Walden	Wilson
Thune	Walsh	Wise
Thurman	Wamp	Wolf
Tiahrt	Watkins	Wu
Toomey	Watts (OK)	Young (FL)
Trafigant	Weldon (FL)	

## NAYS—41

Abercrombie	Hilliard	Olver
Baldwin	Hinchey	Owens
Becerra	Hoeffel	Payne
Brady (PA)	Jackson (IL)	Rodriguez
Carson	Jones (OH)	Roybal-Allard
Clay	Kilpatrick	Rush
Clyburn	Kucinich	Schakowsky
Conyers	Lee	Scott
Davis (IL)	McKinney	Serrano
Dingell	Meek (FL)	Thompson (MS)
Engel	Meeks (NY)	Velazquez
Fattah	Menendez	Waters
Gutierrez	Mink	Wynn
Hastings (FL)	Napolitano	

## ANSWERED "PRESENT"—72

Ackerman	Hoyer	Pallone
Berman	Jackson-Lee	Pascarell
Bishop	(TX)	Pastor
Blumenauer	Johnson, E. B.	Peterson (MN)
Bonior	Kanjorski	Rahall
Borski	LaFalce	Reyes
Brown (FL)	Lantos	Rivers
Brown (OH)	Lewis (GA)	Sabo
Capuano	Lofgren	Sanchez
Clayton	Markey	Sanders
Coyne	Martinez	Sawyer
Crowley	McCarthy (MO)	Slaughter
DeFazio	McDermott	Snyder
DeGette	McGovern	Stabenow
Delahunt	Meehan	Stark
Deutsch	Millender	Tauscher
Dixon	McDonald	Tierney
Eshoo	Miller, George	Udall (CO)
Farr	Moakley	Vento
Filner	Moran (VA)	Watt (NC)
Ford	Nadler	Waxman
Frank (MA)	Neal	Weiner
Gejdenson	Oberstar	Wexler
Gephardt	Obey	Woolsey
Hooley	Ortiz	

## NOT VOTING—10

Berry	Pryce (OH)	Towns
Hinojosa	Rangel	Young (AK)
Jefferson	Rogan	
Pelosi	Sununu	

## □ 1314

Mr. SIMPSON and Mr. CUMMINGS changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

Messrs. DIXON, ORTIZ and WEINER changed their vote from "nay" to "present."

Mr. FORD changed his vote from "yea" to "present."

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Chairman, on the last vote, H. Con. Res. 180, I was detained in traffic while returning to the Capitol. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 398, I was unavoidable detained by heavy traffic. Had I been present, I would have voted "Present."

## □ 1315

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and that I may include tabular and extraneous material of H.R. 2684.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANSEN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

## DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2684.

## □ 1316

## IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2684) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, with Mr. PEASE (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, September 8, 1999, the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) had been disposed of and the bill was open for amendment from page 74, line 17, through page 75, line 18.

Are there further amendments to this portion of the bill?

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, and I ask unanimous consent that we be allowed to return to page 64 for consideration of this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I object. The amendment of the gentleman is out of order. That portion of the bill has already been completed, and by regular order he would not be allowed to reenter the bill.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

## RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FUND

The aggregate charges assessed during fiscal year 2000, as authorized by Public Law 105-276, shall not be less than 100 percent of the amounts anticipated by FEMA necessary

for its radiological emergency preparedness program for the next fiscal year. The methodology for assessment and collection of fees shall be fair and equitable; and shall reflect costs of providing such services, including administrative costs of collecting such fees. Fees received pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the Fund as offsetting collections and will become available for authorized purposes on October 1, 2000, and remain available until expended.

## EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM

To carry out an emergency food and shelter program pursuant to title III of Public Law 100-77, as amended, \$110,000,000: *Provided*, That total administrative costs shall not exceed three and one-half percent of the total appropriation.

## FLOOD MAP MODERNIZATION FUND

For necessary expenses pursuant to section 1360 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, \$5,000,000, and such additional sums as may be provided by State or local governments or other political subdivisions for cost shared mapping activities under section 1360(f)(2), to remain available until expended.

## NATIONAL INSURANCE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Notwithstanding the provisions of 12 U.S.C. 1735d(b) and 12 U.S.C. 1749bbb-13(b)(6), any indebtedness of the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency resulting from the Director borrowing sums under such sections before the date of enactment of this Act to carry out title XII of the National Housing Act shall be canceled, and the Director shall not be obligated to repay such sums or any interest thereon, and no further interest shall accrue on such sums.

## NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE FUND

## (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For activities under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended, not to exceed \$24,333,000 for salaries and expenses associated with flood mitigation and flood insurance operations, and not to exceed \$78,710,000 for flood mitigation, including up to \$20,000,000 for expenses under section 1366 of the National Flood Insurance Act, which amount shall be available for transfer to the National Flood Mitigation Fund until September 30, 2001. In fiscal year 2000, no funds in excess of: (1) \$47,000,000 for operating expenses; (2) \$456,427,000 for agents' commissions and taxes; and (3) \$50,000,000 for interest on Treasury borrowings shall be available from the National Flood Insurance Fund without prior notice to the Committees on Appropriations. For fiscal year 2000, flood insurance rates shall not exceed the level authorized by the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994.

## NATIONAL FLOOD MITIGATION FUND

## (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

Notwithstanding sections 1366(b)(3)(B)-(C) and 1366(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended, \$20,000,000 to remain available until September 30, 2001, for activities designed to reduce the risk of flood damage to structures pursuant to such Act, of which \$20,000,000 shall be derived from the National Flood Insurance Fund.

## GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

## CONSUMER INFORMATION CENTER FUND

For necessary expenses of the Consumer Information Center, including services authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, \$2,622,000, to be deposited into the Consumer Information Center Fund: *Provided*, That the appropriations, revenues and collections deposited into the fund shall be available for necessary expenses of Consumer Information Center activities in the aggregate amount of \$7,500,000. Appropriations, revenues, and collections accruing to this fund during fiscal year 2000 in

excess of \$7,500,000 shall remain in the fund and shall not be available for expenditure except as authorized in appropriations Acts.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE  
ADMINISTRATION  
HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, in the conduct and support of human space flight research and development activities, including research, development, operations, and services; maintenance; construction of facilities including repair, rehabilitation, and modification of real and personal property, and acquisition or condemnation of real property, as authorized by law; space flight, spacecraft control and communications activities including operations, production, and services; and purchase, lease, charter, maintenance and operation of mission and administrative aircraft, \$5,388,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR.  
LATOURETTE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 1 offered by Mr. LATOURETTE:

In the matter relating to "NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION; HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT", after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$67,986,000)".

In the matter relating to "NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION; SCIENCE, AERONAUTICS AND TECHNOLOGY", after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$67,986,000)".

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Chairman, I am offering this amendment with my good friend, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) from the west side of Cleveland, and also I think we will hear from the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES of Ohio) of Cleveland.

I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) the VA-HUD subcommittee chairman, also the work of two great Ohioans on that committee, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) for their hard work on this bill.

I understand and support the fiscally responsible attitude underlying the committee's recommendation, but I believe that the specific cuts disregard the public enthusiasm for NASA funding.

Much like the amendments offered yesterday by my colleague the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN), the purpose of this amendment is to restore funding to the NASA administration relating to science, aeronautics, and space administration.

This amendment, however, differs from the one that we voted on yesterday in that it recognizes the difficult tasks that our appropriators face working within current budget restraints and constraints and honors the overall funding level that they have provided NASA in the bill.

Our amendment's increase and offset are both provided for within NASA's funding, reflecting the importance of

fully funding the aeronautics administration without affecting the money appropriators have directed to other agencies, including Veterans.

The work that is done, specifically in Northeastern Ohio at NASA Glenn Research Center, is important not only to the people of Northeastern Ohio but to the entire country as the world leader in the highly competitive aviation market.

NASA Glenn has been and is an international leader in avionics and jet engine research since 1941. The Glenn Research Center also has expertise in advanced space propulsion and space power systems including the electrical power solar rays for the International Space Station, combustion research, aircraft engine noise and emissions reduction, chemical and electric rocket propulsion, and advanced turbojet aircraft engines.

The Glenn Research Center has received 74 R&D 100 Awards, more than all other NASA centers combined. This proposed increase of \$67,986,000 will help maintain core competency programs in aeronautics. Many NASA research programs have impacted and will impact the lives of all individual citizens.

For example, innovations in the ultra efficient engine technology seek to develop quieter airplanes in anticipation of increased airport congestion in many of our major cities in the United States.

A critical mass of talented people, Mr. Chairman, and scientific resources will be irrevocably damaged in Ohio and elsewhere if the downward swing for funding levels in aerospace programs continues.

The partnerships which emerged between industry and NASA have enabled American products to dominate leading-edge technologies. But funding for aeronautical research has received sharp decreases by almost 50 percent in the last decade.

Continued slashing of funding jeopardizes the development of vital technologies to thrust America forward in the world aviation market.

Mr. Chairman, at the conclusion of my remarks, and I think I will be joined on the floor by my colleagues from Ohio, I see the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) will be here in a minute to take time on this his own behalf, I will be asking unanimous consent, if the subcommittee chairman is kind enough to yield me time, to withdraw this amendment and not have a vote on it.

I do want to emphasize, however, that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the majority whip, in published remarks has indicated that he intends when this matter moves forward to conference with the other body to fight hard to make sure that the funding levels of NASA are restored.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) for his patience. I know he has a lot to do on this bill. I fully appreciate the chal-

lenge that he and other members of the Committee on Appropriations are faced with as they try to do their work while honoring our commitment to fiscal responsibility.

I daresay that he and his colleagues on the committee have jobs quite unlike those of appropriators of years past. But I believe strongly in the need to fully fund NASA's Science, Aeronautics and Space Administration, as I know the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) does.

As the amendments offered yesterday indicate, if my colleagues look at the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN), 185 Members of this House joined the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) with the need to increase funding for this level of program. His offsets came from the EPA environmental programs.

Again, we do not move money from account to account, but we would like this amendment to serve as a bookmark; and I urge the subcommittee chair, which I know he knows the importance of this funding to not only Northeastern Ohio but to the entire area.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I want to first of all thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) for his work and his support on the concerns which we have for the NASA Glenn Research Center in the Greater Cleveland area.

I want to say that people in that community certainly know that we have a bipartisan coalition working together on behalf of that Center.

The budget in the bill for NASA currently before the House represents about a \$1 billion cut, or cut of 10 percent from current funding. The LaTourette amendment would effectively restore \$68 million for important programs for NASA's science, aeronautics, and technology. This increased funding would benefit NASA research centers, projects, and American jobs.

NASA Administrator, Dan Goldin, has said that if the 10-percent cut in this legislation becomes a reality, then one or more NASA centers could be closed and significant layoffs in the existing workforce would be likely.

What a terrible loss to American business and consumers that these cuts closed centers like NASA Glenn Research. NASA Glenn is one of the most important sources of technological innovations and advancement.

For example, NASA Glenn has produced the de-icing system used on every small commercial aircraft, thus enhancing passenger safety. NASA Glenn has developed the coating for scratch resistant eyeglasses used by millions of people who wear glasses. NASA Glenn developed artificial hip joints. NASA Glenn developed fire-resistant fabrics. And NASA Glenn is

now developing aircraft engines that use less fuel, release fewer pollutants, and generate less noise.

Clearly, American consumers stand to benefit from continued NASA Glenn research and activity. So does American business.

For instance, NASA Glenn has helped a Cleveland electronic manufacturer demonstrate the capabilities of its antenna enabling it to win a contract with a German automobile manufacturer. NASA Glenn helped an American vacuum manufacturer improve its products by reducing noise associated with its fans by using sophisticated computer software that was developed for jet engines.

NASA Glenn helps the American satellite industry with developing cutting-edge communications electronics. NASA Glenn helps the aerospace industry with improved jet engines. And NASA Glenn has advanced important microgravity experiments.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and I support increasing funding for NASA science, research, and technology that could be used for activities at various research centers nationwide, including NASA Glenn, where more than 2,000 employees work for a better present and a better future.

The funding for NASA's science, research, and technology promises to yield innovation and major advancements that will make possible a high-technology economy for a long-term future. We must focus on our long-term priorities. These priorities must include the future of American workers with advanced training who deserve high-paying jobs. They must include the future of the American economy.

Let us demonstrate our commitment to the advancement of science and technology. Let us demonstrate our commitment to American workers nationwide. Let us demonstrate our commitment to American consumers and businesses and an expanding economy. And let us demonstrate our commitment and appreciation of NASA.

I also want to thank the scientists the engineers and the support personnel at NASA Glenn for the work that they do, because they are truly serving our country and it is only right that their representatives stand in defense of their work and in appreciation of the work that they do every day for this country and for NASA Glenn.

□ 1330

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the fact that both gentlemen from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) and (Mr. LATOURETTE) have offered this amendment. I understand their concerns. As we discussed yesterday, there were many very difficult decisions to be made, but I must reluctantly oppose the amendment.

I would like to support the additional funding for science, aeronautics and technology; but I cannot do so at the expense of the space station or the

shuttle. We all recognize the important work that is done at the Glenn Research Center, and I pledge to do all that I can when we get to the conference on this bill to restore funding to ensure the center can continue its work.

The problems with funding for the Glenn Research Center should not be solved by creating other problems elsewhere for NASA. A reduction of this magnitude to either the shuttle program or the station program would cause significant problems. If the funding reduction were taken against the shuttle program, safety and reliability upgrades would have to be deferred. If the funding reduction were taken against the space station, NASA would have to defer development of the crew return vehicle or any one of the numerous other efforts under way to ensure timely completion of the station.

There are no easy choices in this bill, but I do pledge to work with the gentlemen from Ohio to address these concerns with regard to the Glenn Research Center, but I must oppose the amendment because it creates more problems than it solves.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALSH. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), for yielding. I also appreciate very much his remarks; and as I indicated during my 5 minutes, the majority whip has also indicated his support, and I am sure that everybody on our side and the other side recognizes the difficulty that the chairman was placed under, and we accept the pledge that we are going to figure our way out of this in conference.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, reserving the right to object, I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the chairman for their concern over this, and we really need support on this and we are going to do everything we can. I want the people to know we are going to do everything we can to try to resolve this.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will yield under his reservation, both gentlemen should know this is a major concern to the subcommittee also.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise at this time to engage in a colloquy with the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), and also the ranking

member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN).

Mr. Chairman, at the full Committee on Appropriations markup, I spoke on the issue of NOx, although I did not offer an amendment on the subject. I addressed what I felt was an apparent inequity created by two separate and conflicting actions that occurred last May. One was EPA issuing a final rule implementing a consent decree under section 126 of the Clean Air Act that is triggered in essence by EPA not approving the NOx SIP Call provisions of 22 States and the District of Columbia by November 30, 1999. The other was by the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in issuing an order staying the requirement imposed in EPA's 1998 NOx SIP Call for these jurisdictions to submit the SIP revisions just mentioned for EPA approval.

Caught in the middle of these two events are electric utilities and industrial sources who fear that now the trigger will be sprung next November 30, even though the States are no longer required to make those SIP revisions because of the stay, and even though EPA will have nothing before it to approve or disapprove.

Prior to this, EPA maintained a close link between the NOx SIP Call and the section 126 rule, as evidenced by the consent decree.

My proposal was to apply a parallel stay. It would have simply prevented EPA from implementing the NOx regulations through the back-door until the litigation is complete.

I believe such a stay is needed, because even though EPA said only a few months ago that the principles of State discretion embodied in the Clean Air Act require that States first address any interstate ozone transport problems through State implementation plans submitted in response to the NOx SIP Call rule, I understand that EPA is now suggesting it may reverse its interpretation of this act, forcing businesses to comply with EPA's federal emission controls under section 126 without regard to NOx SIP Call rule and State input.

This proposed reversal is creating confusion for the businesses and States. Under EPA's proposed new position, businesses could incur substantial costs in meeting the EPA-imposed section 126 emission controls before allowing the States to use their discretion in the SIP process to address air quality problems, less stringent controls or through controls on other facilities altogether.

Indeed, the fact that these businesses almost certainly will have sunk significant costs into compliance with the EPA-imposed controls before States are required to submit their emission control plans in response to the NOx SIP Call rule would result in impermissible pressure on their States to forfeit their discretion and instead simply conform their State Implementation Plans or SIPs to EPA section 126 controls.



While I think such an amendment is needed, I recognize the concerns of my good friends and agree not to offer it. Nevertheless, I believe that if EPA proceeds on its present course, we will have an untenable situation that EPA could avoid if it has a mind to do so.

In summary, the two independent actions in May, EPA's issuance of a final rule implementing the consent decree and number two the court stay of the NOx rule, need to be addressed.

Therefore, I ask my distinguished colleagues if they would agree with me that EPA should find a reasonable way to avoid triggering the 126 process while the courts deliberate.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG), my friend, for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I very much appreciate the gentleman bringing this to the House's attention, the apparent dilemma created by these two events both occurred in May. I recognize, of course, the concern for my State, New York, that this matter be resolved swiftly and real remedies be adopted. I would encourage and expect the EPA to, over the next several months, find a way that is fair to all sides and recognize that the States should be the one to control the air pollution problems and not have them addressed by the sources therein without State input through the SIP process.

I, therefore, will work with the gentleman to see that EPA is fully responsive to these legitimate problems.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for his comments.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, as my friend, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) knows, I share his concerns on this matter. I would agree that EPA's apparent decoupling of the section 126 petitions from the NOx SIP Call is causing major confusion to industry and State regulators alike, particularly in my State of West Virginia. I join him in his strong encouragement that EPA work with all parties involved in this situation to find a fair resolution, and I look forward to working with him and the chairman and EPA and the industries in this regard.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I would like to engage the distinguished subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), in a colloquy.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. KAPTUR. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to join in that colloquy with the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), a distinguished member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for his cooperation on this matter.

Mr. Chairman, in the bill, we have granted some additional funding to the National Credit Union Administration for its revolving loan fund for low income credit unions, and I thank the chairman for his leadership and consideration.

The purpose of the revolving loan fund is to make low interest loans to credit unions that serve primarily low income populations, and the earnings from the fund are used for technical assistance grants to low income credit unions so we really can help people become bankable.

Mr. WALSH. The gentlewoman is correct.

Ms. KAPTUR. I would like to emphasize then that when such technical assistance is made available to credit unions, the National Credit Union Administration should make every effort to ensure that such assistance is provided in a manner that is sensitive to the particular needs of the given credit union and considers the technical sophistication and background of the credit union's board and management.

Specifically, the National Credit Union Administration should recognize the unique circumstances of community development credit unions as opposed to all other credit unions and assure that specific technical staff is designated and trained to provide appropriate assistance to community development credit unions which primarily serve low income communities which are a unique subset of all credit unions.

Mr. WALSH. The gentlewoman's suggestion is an excellent one, and it is clearly consistent with the intent of the subcommittee's action today.

Ms. KAPTUR. In addition to formal technical assistance funded by the interest earned on community development revolving loan fund loans, occasionally the National Credit Union Administration examiners will assist a small or a troubled credit union with some aspect of operations as part of the regular examination process.

I also want to urge the National Credit Union Administration, when providing such assistance, to ensure that staff take special care to act in ways that respect and honor the dedication of a credit union's board and managers.

Mr. WALSH. Once again, the gentlewoman from Ohio makes an excellent point, and I would urge the NCUA to heed her advice.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank again the chairman for all of his work on this

bill, which is not an easy bill to move through this Chamber with all the respective departments and agencies, and for his special consideration on this particular subset of credit unions, largely serving communities where all other financial institutions have moved out.

Mr. WALSH. I thank the gentlewoman for her comments and for her dedication to the committee and to this issue of credit unions, where she has been a leader.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to enter into a colloquy with the chairman of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies concerning the current level of funding for veterans medical care on H.R. 2684.

Mr. Chairman, I am most thankful for the good work of the Members of the House Committee on Appropriations for bringing to the floor a bill with a \$1.7 billion increase in spending for veterans medical care. This is the largest increase ever and would not have been possible without the hard work of the chairman of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies chairman, my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

Unfortunately, despite this increase, lower New York and northern New Jersey could receive \$40 million less than last year. According to the VISN 3 director, our network faces an estimated \$125 million deficit due to inflation, VA's funding methodology and an increased demand for services, especially hepatitis C treatment.

The staff in VISN 3 have worked hard to identify cost savings and efficiencies, reduced its workforce and streamlined operations to work within the funding levels dictated by VA's methodology. Now, after squeezing every available dollar from the system, the VISN 3 director tells us we are at the point where veteran medical care, quality and access is at risk if he is forced to make any additional cuts in fiscal year 2000.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to get assurances that the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies chairman will examine the distribution of funds to ensure that all regions of the country have the resources to provide quality health care for all of our Nation's veterans.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. KELLY. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for bringing these important points to the committee's attention today, and I also would like to congratulate her and thank her for the leadership that she has provided on veterans issues. Veterans issues are constantly before her attention, and she makes very solid arguments in defense of and in support of veterans health.

I, too, as a member of the New York delegation am well aware of the problems in VISN 3. Under this funding level, we have opportunities to address those issues.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. KELLY. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to join my colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY), in entering into a colloquy with the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), concerning the current level of funding for veterans health care in H.R. 2684; and I want to commend the chairman and the other Members of the House Committee on Appropriations for their significant efforts to secure an additional \$1.7 billion over the President's request for veterans medical care.

Regrettably, this historic increase in funding will do nothing to help meet the needs of our veterans in lower New York and northern New Jersey. The implementation of the Veterans Equity Resource Allocation system, known as VERA, some 3 years ago has led to over \$120 million being taken away from the operating budget of our area, VISN 3.

To date, the VISN director and his staff have worked hard to trim the fat in their budget while assuring our offices they would notify us when further cuts would negatively impact care.

VISN 3 has now reached that point. Since 1997, the VA hospitals in my district at Castle Point and Montrose have had their budgets cut by \$7.3 million. Since 1995, these hospitals have lost some 549 employees, a decrease of some 25 percent, the equivalent of an entire hospital.

At the same time, medical inflation has raised pharmacy costs for the VISN by 16 percent. The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) has noted the financial shortfall facing VISN 3. This shortfall will have a very real impact, a severe impact, on the quality of care being delivered to a veterans population that is older, less mobile, and in more need of specialized care than its counterparts in other VISNs.

Accordingly, I respectfully request the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), to carefully review the distribution of medical care funds to ensure that the veterans of VISN 3 are not going to be denied the quality of care that their service to their Nation has earned for them.

Mr. WALSH. I thank my colleague from New York for his dedication to this issue, as he has provided leadership on this issue and so many others.

I assure him I will keep a close watch on the funding challenges for VISN 3.

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. KELLY. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by complimenting the chairman of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies for his outstanding work on housing and a number of different issues that we work closely on. As the chairman knows, we have and I have had a particular concern about the overall level of funding for veterans programs, and veterans health programs in particular, throughout this appropriations process.

As submitted by the President, the funding level for this account in the President's budget would have resulted in dramatic reductions.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Mrs. KELLY was allowed to proceed for 2 additional minutes.)

Mr. LAZIO. The President's budget, as we all know, would have resulted in dramatic reductions in health care services for many parts of the country.

I have met with constituents in many different areas of New York State who rely on this for their primary health care. I have heard the struggles that they have had in times of declining resources.

I appreciate, perhaps as much as anybody in this House, the leadership that the chairman has shown in crafting the bill that now contains the largest increase in veterans medical care in 20 years.

I am concerned, however, to learn that the veterans in my district may not share in this historic increase. Of the \$1.7 billion increase, veterans in my region may receive as little as \$6 million over FY 1999.

The North Port Medical Center, which supports veterans from my district and throughout Long Island, may still have a shortfall of millions of dollars. This shortfall would be the third consecutive year for reductions to this VISN, compounding the health care concerns of my constituents who have already experienced it with an increasing demand on services like treatment for hepatitis C and long-term health care.

Mr. Chairman, I believe this bill was intended to provide sufficient funding for all regions of the country to avoid cuts in services to veterans. I would like to get the assurances of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies chairman, my distinguished friend, that in the face of this historic increase in funding all VISNs will have sufficient resources to provide quality health care, and in particular the North Port facility in Long Island.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. KELLY. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. I thank the gentleman for his comments regarding our efforts

on the bills in general, and I would like to commend him for the leadership that he has provided and the dedication he has shown to veterans and his congressional district and all over New York State.

I appreciate the efforts of all of my colleagues in New York and northern New Jersey in increasing the amount of funding available for veterans health care, and will continue to work with the gentleman and our colleagues in the Senate and the administration to ensure VISN 3 will have the resources to ensure that the level of services and care for veterans in New York and New Jersey are not reduced as a result of this bill, including distribution of reserve funds.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, we all appreciate the committee's efforts on that and look forward to continuing our work, Mr. Chairman. We would like to have the chairman's assurances that he will continue in the future to work with us on this allocation.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) has expired.

(On request of Mr. WALSH, and by unanimous consent, Mrs. KELLY was allowed to proceed for 1 additional minute.)

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I stand ready to work with all Members to assure that each VISN receives sufficient funding.

Mrs. KELLY. I want to thank the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), and the committee for their continued efforts on behalf of our veterans and look forward to working with them to ensure the proper medical care for all veterans in the Nation. We thank the gentleman so much for his hard work.

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to engage the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the subcommittee, in a colloquy.

Mr. WALSH. I would be happy to join the gentlewoman in a colloquy.

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlemen from New York (Mr. WALSH) for his leadership efforts on this most important effort.

As we have been made aware, I have some concerns about the bill. First and foremost among those concerns is the omission of the funding for the new surgical suite and post-anesthesia care unit in the Kansas City Veterans Affairs Medical Center in my district.

This medical center serves a growing population of almost 200,000 veterans in the Kansas City area, as well as referrals from 15 other medical centers from the four-state region. Those veterans are currently being served by an underfunded and undersized and deteriorating 50-year-old surgical facility, where corridors are used to store equipment; operating rooms are used for pre-operative care; and backlogs extend as long as 24 weeks.

In these appalling conditions, veterans are wheeled down crowded corridors from surgical room to holding areas to post-operative care in plain view of their loving families. Veterans are waiting between 2 and 6 months for critical medical procedures ranging from hip replacement to neurosurgery.

In my letter to the chairman dated August 30, I explained that the new 31,000 square foot medical facility will eliminate these flaws by imposing both the quality and the access to medical attention. The project will reduce operating room turnover time from 45 minutes to 15 minutes, thus allowing 325 more cases to be performed each year.

□ 1345

The addition of holding rooms will also reduce scheduling backlogs, thus enabling 200 additional procedures per year.

This facility was listed by the Department of Veterans Affairs as the single most important construction project in the entire country. To disregard that judgment contradicts their unique expertise and effectively shuts our eyes and ears to the health care needs of this country's proud veterans. I think I can speak for the entire region when I say we must provide quality medical care for our veterans, and more than that, we must be guided by our veterans as we do so.

Every Member of this Chamber is painfully aware of funding limitations, but I would request of them that every effort be made in the conference committee to restore funding to this vitally important provision.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for her comments and for her concern and her advocacy for this important project. We faced some extremely difficult decisions when working with our allocation. We agree that the surgical suite project at Kansas City Veterans Affairs Medical Center is a meritorious project worthy of funding. Unfortunately, money was tight. We chose two projects that already had prior year funding to complete them.

As we move to conference, I assure my colleague from Missouri (Ms. MCCARTHY) that we will make every effort to fund this important project.

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for his leadership.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON-LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas:

Page 79, line 5, insert "(increased by \$250,000,000)" after the dollar amount.

Page 79, line 19, insert "(increased by \$449,000,000)" after the dollar amount.

Page 80, line 14, insert "(increased by \$225,600,000)" after the dollar amount.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentlewoman's amendment.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I offer this amendment along with my colleagues, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON).

After yesterday's debate on the floor of the House specifically relating to the funding of NASA, a number of amendments that have been offered by my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, to add more dollars to the massive funding and most of whom or all of which failed, I offer this amendment, Mr. Chairman, to in fact restore the full funding to \$24,600,000, the amount of moneys, almost a billion dollars, that was cut from NASA. This is with the understanding and appreciation of the leadership of the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), and the kind words that they have already said to me along with the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) on their viewpoints about NASA and the efforts along with some of the other concerns colleagues have expressed as we move toward conference. But I thought that the reduction of almost a billion dollars was so devastating that it was simply important to make the record for the American people that this basically halts, if my colleagues will, the American space program of which I believe over the years we have gleaned and garnered the commitment, the support, and the appreciation of the American people.

If I take, for example, the Johnson Space Center in Houston which provides work for over 15,000 people, a work force consisting of 3,000 NASA Federal service employees and 12,000 contractor employees, NASA predicted the effects of the cuts on the Johnson Space Center, and that picture is not pleasant. NASA predicts that an estimated 100 contractors would have to be laid off, contractors composed of many employees and workers. Clinic operations, would be reduced. Public affairs, community outreach would be drastically reduced. Also NASA would likely institute a 21-day furlough to offset the effects of the cuts.

I just recently met with and visited with some of those who are members of the Machinists Union, individuals who work and saw the nuts and bolts of what is going on at NASA Johnson. They would be drastically impacted. The hundred million dollar reduction in the International Space Station would be attributed to the space center and would cause reductions in the crew return vehicle program. This would result in a 1- to 2-year production slip and would require America to completely rely upon Russia for crew returns.

This is not only a Johnson Space Center issue. NASA Goddard Space Flight Center would maybe cut over 2,500 jobs. Such layoffs would affect both Maryland and Virginia. The hundred million dollar reduction in NASA's research and development

would result in an immediate reduction in the work force of 1,100 employees for FY 2001. This would also require a hiring freeze, and NASA would not be able to maintain the necessary skills to implement future NASA missions.

Mr. Chairman, we have seen some of the exciting efforts that NASA has engaged in over the past months. The journey of John Glenn that tested and did research on the aging process, the leadership of Eileen Collins who commanded one of the recent shuttles, the docking of the Discovery with Russian Mir, and we also realized that Russian Mir is to be retired and the International Space Station is to be the leader of research in space that will deal with strokes, and high blood pressure, diabetes, HIV/AIDS.

This \$924 million cut, almost a billion dollars, warrants this extreme measure that I am offering today which is to restore those funds. It calls upon this Congress and this House and this subcommittee to waive the point of order and to allow us to proceed and restore NASA to where it was. This is not a request for additional funds. This is not a request to in any way put NASA above some of the other concerns of Members. It is a request to, if my colleagues will, keep our commitment to NASA where we indicated there would be even funding for the last 5 years of the 13 approximately point 5 billion dollars.

What we are saying is that this cut of almost a billion dollars literally stops NASA in its tracks. It literally says, "If you're building a bridge, you have stopped the building of that bridge, and you've caused everyone traveling on that bridge to fall off into the deep waters." I would ask my colleagues to realize as well that NASA has been one of the leanest, and I will not say meanest, agencies who has offered to cut itself willingly. In fact, it has cut itself \$35 billion, and that has resulted in \$35 billion in savings.

As I close, Mr. Chairman, let me simply ask that we have an opportunity to vote on this amendment and restore full funding to NASA for this budget year.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment with my colleagues, Representatives BART GORDON, GENE GREEN and NICK LAMPSON to satisfy the NASA appropriations request, raising the Appropriations Committee's recommendation by \$924,600,000.

I have not offered any offsets because this bill is so flawed, we cannot provide offsets without impinging upon other vitally important budget items. It is my hope that my colleagues will realize that it is necessary to waive any point of order so we can fund this very significant agency. We must remain united against this poorly drafted bill.

Recently, the movie "October Sky" captured our imaginations. This movie, based upon the autobiographical book written by Homer Hickam, tells the tale of a young boy who dreams of building rockets. Hickam grew up in a blue-collar town in West Virginia, yet, he believed in his abilities. He believed that he could build rockets that would torch the sky. And ladies and gentlemen, he succeeded. His

rockets won him national acclaim, and he eventually became a NASA engineer.

This bill would take such a dream and crush it beneath the weight of political posturing. This bill would tell our children, "Forget about space. You will never reach it."

And our children's dreams are not the only casualties. Jobs are at stake. As a Representative for the City of Houston, I cannot stand by and watch my Houstonians lose their jobs because of these cuts. The Johnson Space Center in Houston provides work for over 15,000 people. The workforce consists of approximately 3,000 NASA Federal civil service employees. In addition to these employees are over 12,000 contractor employees.

NASA has predicted the effects of the cuts on the Johnson Space Center, and the picture is not pleasant. NASA predicts that an estimated 100 contractors would have to be laid off, contractors composed of many employees and workers; clinic operations would be reduced; and public affairs, particularly community outreach, would be drastically reduced. Also, NASA would likely institute a 21 day furlough to offset the effects of the cuts, and this furlough will place many families in dire straits. Also, the Johnson Space Center would have to eliminate its employee Safety and Total Health program.

The entire \$100 million reduction in the International Space Station would be attributed to the space center and would cause reductions in the Crew Return Vehicle program. This would result in a 1 to 2 year production slip and would require America to completely rely upon Russia for crew returns. This is a humiliating situation! We pride ourselves in being the world leader in space exploration, yet, what does it tell our international neighbors when we do not even have enough funding to bring our astronauts home?

The cuts would not only affect Houston; they would affect the rest of the country. NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center would need to cut over 2,500 jobs. Such layoffs would affect both Maryland and Virginia.

The \$100 million reduction in NASA's research and development would result in an immediate reduction in the workforce of 1,100 employees for FY 2001. This would also require a hiring freeze, and NASA would not be able to maintain the necessary skills to implement future NASA missions.

Negative effects will also occur across our Nation. Clearly, States such as Texas, Florida, and Alabama will see substantial cuts to the workforce, but given today's widespread interstate commerce, it is easy to imagine that these cuts to the NASA program will hit home throughout America. And NASA warns that the country may not see the total effects of this devastation to our country's future scientists and engineers for many years.

NASA contractors and employees represent both big and small businesses, and their very livelihoods are at stake—especially those in small business. They can ill afford the flood of layoffs that would certainly result from this bill.

Dan Goldin, head of NASA, has already anticipated the devastating effects of the NASA cuts. He predicts a 3 week furlough for all NASA employees. This would create program interruptions and would result in greater costs. Ladies and gentlemen, we are falling, if not tumbling, down a slippery slope. This bill would reduce jobs for engineers and would increase NASA's costs, a result that will only re-

sult in more layoffs as costs exceed NASA's fiscal abilities.

We are at a dangerous crossroads. This bill gives our engineers and our science academics a vote of no confidence. It tells them that we will not reward Americans who spend their lifetimes studying and researching on behalf of space exploration. I urge my colleagues to join me in my effort to stop the bleeding.

Over the past six years, NASA has led the Federal Government in streamlining the Agency's budget and institution, resulting in approximately \$35 billion in budget savings relative to earlier outyear estimates. During the same period, NASA reinvented itself, reducing personnel by almost 1/3, while continuing to increase productivity. The massive cuts recommended by the Committee would destroy the balance in the civil space program that has been achieved between science and human space flight in recent years.

In particular, the Committee's recommendation falls \$250 million short of NASA's request for its Human Space Flight department. This greatly concerns me because this budget item provides for human space flight activities, including the development of the international space station and the operation of the space shuttle.

I firmly believe that a viable, cost-effective International Space Station has been devised. We already have many of the space station's components in orbit. Already the space station is 77-feet long and weighs over 77,000 pounds. We have tangible results from the money we have spent on this program.

Just this past summer, we had a historic docking of the space shuttle Discovery with the International Space Station. The entire world rejoiced as Mission Commander Kent Rominger guided the Discovery as the shuttle connected with our international outpost for the first time. The shuttle crew attached a crane and transferred over two tons of supplies to the space station.

History has been made, yet, we seek to withdraw funding for the two vital components, the space station and the space shuttle, that made this moment possible. We cannot lose sight of the big picture. With another 45 space missions necessary to complete the space station, it would be a grave error of judgment to impede on the progress of this significant step toward further space exploration.

Given NASA's recognition of a need for increased funding for Shuttle safety upgrades, it is NASA's assessment that the impact of a \$150 million cut in shuttle funding would be a reduction in shuttle flight rate, specifically impacting ISS assembly. Slowing the progress of the ISS assembly would defer full research capabilities and would result in cost increases.

Both the International Space Station and the space shuttle have a long, glorious history of international relations. We can recall the images of our space shuttle docking with the Russian Mir space station. Our nations have made such a connection nine times in recent years. This connection transcended scientific discovery: it signified the true end of the Cold War and represented an important step toward international harmony.

The International Space Station, designed and built by 16 nations from across the globe, also represents a great international endeavor. Astronauts have already delivered the American-made Unity chamber and have connected it to the Russian-built Zarya control module.

Countless people from various countries have spent their time and efforts on the space station.

To under-fund this project is to turn our backs on our international neighbors. Space exploration and scientific discovery is universal, and it is imperative that we continue to move forward.

I also denounce the cuts made by the Appropriations Committee to NASA's science, aeronautics, and technology. This bill cuts funding for this program \$678 million below the 1999 level.

By cutting this portion of the NASA budget, we will be unable to develop new methodologies, better observing instruments, and improved techniques for translating raw data into useful end products. It also cancels our "Pathfinder" generation of earth probes.

Reducing funding for NASA's science, aeronautics, and technology hinders the work of our space sciences, our earth sciences, our academic programs, and many other vitally important programs. By under-funding this item by \$449 million, the Appropriations Committee will severely impede upon the progress of these NASA projects.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) insist on his point of order?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve a point of order.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate my colleague from Houston, Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) bringing her amendment. Service on the Committee on Science, I think points out the need for this.

I have a district in Houston. It does not come close to the Johnson Space Center, but I also know the benefits that we all receive, even if we do not represent that particular area from both NASA and the science investment that NASA is doing and also the International Space Station. I appreciate the Committee on Appropriations adding the 400 additional million for NASA, however it still falls about a billion dollars short of what NASA needs to be an effective agency and to continue to be literally the world leader in preeminent space program. U.S. space program is the envy of the world, and I know a lot of Members get to visit with other countries, and oftentimes that will be sometimes the first issue they will talk about is the space program. The continued success of programs like the Mars Lander or the Hubble Telescope should not be halted because of shortsighted funds.

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We are just beginning to understand this great huge universe that we have, and missions to search for water on the moon or to find life on Mars is what is keeping our Nation's technology and academic advancements going.

For the past few years I have had the opportunity, though, to have astronauts visit in the schools in my district. They will come in to our middle schools and talk about what they do and their job to encourage students to continue efforts or have an interest in math and science.

So we are not just talking about dollars and cents when we are talking about the NASA budget. We are talking about the impact of having an astronaut or a contractor who works with NASA come to our schools and make our students realize how important it is to have math and science. Maybe we would have more math and science majors than lawyers, Mr. Chairman. Since I am a lawyer and was not good in math and science, maybe I needed an astronaut when I was in the seventh or eighth grade to convince me of that.

The proposed cuts would eliminate a host of technology and research programs, and particularly at the Johnson Space Center in Houston in their research in astro materials such as extra-terrestrial water that was trapped in crystals from outer space that just recently landed in West Texas, a meteor.

The proposed cuts would scuttle any progress on the Mars exploration. Even though the Mars exploration is being done literally on the cheap right now, this would make it even worse.

Space exploration is important and plays a critical role in our Nation's future, and I would hope that we would be able to, if not in this amendment today, then through the conference committee, restore the funding to NASA, because they have adopted a pretty good lean machine the last 3 or 4 years under Dan Goldin, and I think we ought to continue that success.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GREEN of Texas. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman for his support in joining me in offering this amendment. One of the things I think Americans understand is when you tighten your belt yourself, and you just mentioned NASA has done that. But what we lose as well, and I know it impacts the gentleman's district, is an enormous number of jobs.

I do not know if the gentleman wants to further comment on that, but we already know there will be furloughs. We know that working men and women, people who are just blue collar workers, will lose their jobs, as well as our scientists and researchers.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, my colleague is correct, although Mr. Chairman, I have to be honest, when somebody in my district that is a blue collar worker gets a job at Johnson Space Center, they move to the district of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) or the district of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) or the district of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN). They do not stay typically in my district in the inner-city. But it is important to those blue collar workers. That is why, Mr. Chairman, I hope when we do go to conference committee, that that funding will be restored.

## POINT OF ORDER

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Does the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) insist on his point of order?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I do insist on my point of order.

Mr. Speaker, I make the point of order against the amendment because it violates the rules of the House since it calls for an en bloc consideration of two different paragraphs of the bill. Precedents of the House are clear on this matter. Amendments to a paragraph or section are not in order until such paragraph or section has been read.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) wish to be heard on the point of order?

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I would appreciate it very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, can I inquire whether or not I can yield to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) on the point of order, or can he be heard on the point of order, the ranking member?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) be heard.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The point of order is reserved.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I will be brief. I just want to point out the great need and the devastation that will occur if this is not carried. I want to point out some of the background.

Back in the early nineties there was a great effort made at the time when we had projected continued deficits that we would have cutbacks, and they called on all of the committees to cut back anywhere from 5 to 10 to 15 percent.

Well, space particularly and the NASA program, it is hard to cut back when you do not really know the effect of what you are doing. So with the help of the then ranking minority Member, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), I as chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics called in Mr. Goldin and told him what our problem was.

We said, You can cut it with a surgeon's knife or we will cut the budget with a baseball bat, and it makes more sense to do it by someone like you, because when we cut the budget, we are always frightful we are going to cause loss of life or cut it in some life-threatening area.

Well, the thing I want to report to you is in the early nineties the projected spending for NASA was some \$18 billion, and the reorganization and streamlining that took place at that time reduced it some 30 percent. So we have already taken hard licks in the NASA budget, hard licks in the space

program, and really and truly by keeping the faith now we really do suffer from the cut that is proposed at this time.

I urge a reconsideration of this. I totally support the gentlewoman from Houston and those from other parts that support NASA. I do not doubt that you on that side support NASA and want the best for the program. I just urge you to reconsider and to give us some help somewhere along the line, whether it is at the level of the House and Senate conference committee or wherever it might be, to reconsider this.

## POINT OF ORDER

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) insist on his point of order for the reasons stated?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I do insist on the point of order. I would offer to the gentleman and gentlewoman that spoke the comments I made throughout the debate on this bill, that we understand your concerns. We have those same concerns. The difficult choices made while producing this bill caused us to make these rather difficult cuts.

As I have said, I will continue to work with all who have an interest in supporting this terribly important program, that as we work through the process and get to conference, we will try to fill those gaps as we go down the road.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for that. I would like to point out that today the real dollar funding has gone down from the \$14.4 billion to the \$13.6 billion. At a time when they are projecting a \$1 trillion savings in the next 10 years, this is no time to cut down our opportunity to really move ahead in the field of science.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) wish to be heard on the point of order?

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleagues who have come to the floor. I said yesterday that this is a hard question of choices, and I realize I asked originally for the point of order to be waived.

At this time, Mr. Chairman, with the representation of the chairman and the good work of the ranking member, I would simply ask at this time, Mr. Chairman, that the amendment be withdrawn and that I would offer to work with the chairman of the subcommittee and the ranking member of the full committee, the chairman of the full committee and the ranking member of the subcommittee on this very vital issue, not only to Texas, this is not a selfish position, but to the Nation. I wanted to call this America's space program, and I hope we will get NASA back to full funding soon, to save American jobs and to save America's space program.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

#### SCIENCE, AERONAUTICS AND TECHNOLOGY

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, in the conduct and support of science, aeronautics and technology research and development activities, including research, development, operations, and services; maintenance; construction of facilities including repair, rehabilitation, and modification of real and personal property, and acquisition or condemnation of real property, as authorized by law; space flight, spacecraft control and communications activities including operations, production, and services; and purchase, lease, charter, maintenance and operation of mission and administrative aircraft, \$4,975,700,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001.

#### MISSION SUPPORT

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, in carrying out mission support for human space flight programs and science, aeronautical, and technology programs, including research operations and support; space communications activities including operations, production and services; maintenance; construction of facilities including repair, rehabilitation, and modification of facilities, minor construction of new facilities and additions to existing facilities, facility planning and design, environmental compliance and restoration, and acquisition or condemnation of real property, as authorized by law; program management; personnel and related costs, including uniforms or allowances therefor, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901-5902; travel expenses; purchase, lease, charter, maintenance, and operation of mission and administrative aircraft; not to exceed \$35,000 for official reception and representation expenses; and purchase (not to exceed 33 for replacement only) and hire of passenger motor vehicles, \$2,269,300,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001.

#### OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, \$20,800,000.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

Notwithstanding the limitation on the availability of funds appropriated for "Human space flight", "Science, aeronautics and technology", or "Mission support" by this appropriations Act, when any activity has been initiated by the incurrence of obligations for construction of facilities as authorized by law, such amount available for such activity shall remain available until expended. This provision does not apply to the amounts appropriated in "Mission support" pursuant to the authorization for repair, rehabilitation and modification of facilities, minor construction of new facilities and additions to existing facilities, and facility planning and design.

Notwithstanding the limitation on the availability of funds appropriated for "Human space flight", "Science, aeronautics and technology", or "Mission support" by this appropriations Act, the amounts appropriated for construction of facilities shall remain available until September 30, 2002.

Notwithstanding the limitation on the availability of funds appropriated for "Mission support" and "Office of Inspector General", amounts made available by this Act for personnel and related costs and travel expenses of the National Aeronautics and

Space Administration shall remain available until September 30, 2000 and may be used to enter into contracts for training, investigations, costs associated with personnel relocation, and for other services, to be provided during the next fiscal year.

NASA shall develop a revised appropriation account structure for submission in the fiscal year 2001 budget request consisting of the "Human Space Flight" account; the "Science, Aeronautics, and Technology" account; and the "Office of Inspector General" account. The accounts shall each include the planned full costs (direct and indirect costs) of NASA's related activities and allow NASA to shift civil service salaries, benefits and support among accounts, as required, for the safe, timely, and successful accomplishment of NASA missions.

#### NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION CENTRAL LIQUIDITY FACILITY

During fiscal year 2000, administrative expenses of the Central Liquidity Facility shall not exceed \$257,000; *Provided*, That \$1,000,000, together with amounts of principal and interest on loans repaid, to be available until expended, is available for loans to community development credit unions.

#### NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION RESEARCH AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

For necessary expenses in carrying out the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1861-1875), and the Act to establish a National Medal of Science (42 U.S.C. 1880-1881); services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109; maintenance and operation of aircraft and purchase of flight services for research support; acquisition of aircraft, award-related travel, \$2,778,500,000, of which not to exceed \$245,600,000 shall remain available until expended for Polar research and operations support, and for reimbursement to other Federal agencies for operational and science support and logistical and other related activities for the United States Antarctic program; the balance to remain available until September 30, 2001: *Provided*, That receipts for scientific support services and materials furnished by the National Science Foundation supported research facilities may be credited to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That to the extent that the amount appropriated is less than the total amount authorized to be appropriated for included program activities, all amounts, including floors and ceilings, specified in the authorizing Act for those program activities or their subactivities shall be reduced proportionally.

#### MAJOR RESEARCH EQUIPMENT

For necessary expenses of major construction projects pursuant to the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended, including award-related travel, \$56,500,000, to remain available until expended.

#### EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

For necessary expenses in carrying out science and engineering education and human resources programs and activities pursuant to the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1861-1875), including services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, award-related travel, and rental of conference rooms in the District of Columbia, \$660,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001: *Provided*, That to the extent that the amount of this appropriation is less than the total amount authorized to be appropriated for included program activities, all amounts, including floors and ceilings, specified in the authorizing Act for those program activities or their subactivities shall be reduced proportionally.

#### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For salaries and expenses necessary in carrying out the National Science Foundation

Act of 1950, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1861-1875); services authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109; hire of passenger motor vehicles; not to exceed \$9,000 for official reception and representation expenses; uniforms or allowances therefor, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901-5902; rental of conference rooms in the District of Columbia; reimbursement of the General Services Administration for security guard services; \$146,500,000: *Provided*, That contracts may be entered into under "Salaries and expenses" in fiscal year 2000 for maintenance and operation of facilities, and for other services, to be provided during the next fiscal year.

#### OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General as authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, \$5,325,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT CORPORATION PAYMENT TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT CORPORATION

For payment to the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation for use in neighborhood reinvestment activities, as authorized by the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation Act (42 U.S.C. 8101-8107), \$80,000,000.

#### SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM SALARIES AND EXPENSES

To carry out the orderly termination of the programs and activities authorized by 5 U.S.C. 4101-4118, \$7,000,000.

#### TITLE IV—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 401. Where appropriations in titles I, II, and III of this Act are expendable for travel expenses and no specific limitation has been placed thereon, the expenditures for such travel expenses may not exceed the amounts set forth therefore in the budget estimates submitted for the appropriations: *Provided*, That this provision does not apply to accounts that do not contain an object classification for travel: *Provided further*, That this section shall not apply to travel performed by uncompensated officials of local boards and appeal boards of the Selective Service System; to travel performed directly in connection with care and treatment of medical beneficiaries of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to travel performed in connection with major disasters or emergencies declared or determined by the President under the provisions of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act; to travel performed by the Offices of Inspector General in connection with audits and investigations; or to payments to interagency motor pools where separately set forth in the budget schedules: *Provided further*, That if appropriations in titles I, II, and III exceed the amounts set forth in budget estimates initially submitted for such appropriations, the expenditures for travel may correspondingly exceed the amounts therefore set forth in the estimates in the same proportion.

SEC. 402. Appropriations and funds available for the administrative expenses of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Selective Service System shall be available in the current fiscal year for purchase of uniforms, or allowances therefor, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901-5902; hire of passenger motor vehicles; and services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109.

SEC. 403. Funds of the Department of Housing and Urban Development subject to the Government Corporation Control Act or section 402 of the Housing Act of 1950 shall be available, without regard to the limitations on administrative expenses, for legal services on a contract or fee basis, and for utilizing and making payment for services and



facilities of Federal National Mortgage Association, Government National Mortgage Association, Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, Federal Financing Bank, Federal Reserve banks or any member thereof, Federal Home Loan banks, and any insured bank within the meaning of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Act, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1811–1831).

SEC. 404. No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year unless expressly so provided herein.

SEC. 405. No funds appropriated by this Act may be expended—

(1) pursuant to a certification of an officer or employee of the United States unless—

(A) such certification is accompanied by, or is part of, a voucher or abstract which describes the payee or payees and the items or services for which such expenditure is being made; or

(B) the expenditure of funds pursuant to such certification, and without such a voucher or abstract, is specifically authorized by law; and

(2) unless such expenditure is subject to audit by the General Accounting Office or is specifically exempt by law from such audit.

SEC. 406. None of the funds provided in this Act to any department or agency may be expended for the transportation of any officer or employee of such department or agency between their domicile and their place of employment, with the exception of any officer or employee authorized such transportation under 31 U.S.C. 1344 or 5 U.S.C. 7905.

SEC. 407. None of the funds provided in this Act may be used for payment, through grants or contracts, to recipients that do not share in the cost of conducting research resulting from proposals not specifically solicited by the Government: *Provided*, That the extent of cost sharing by the recipient shall reflect the mutuality of interest of the grantee or contractor and the Government in the research.

SEC. 408. None of the funds in this Act may be used, directly or through grants, to pay or to provide reimbursement for payment of the salary of a consultant (whether retained by the Federal Government or a grantee) at more than the daily equivalent of the rate paid for level IV of the Executive Schedule, unless specifically authorized by law.

SEC. 409. None of the funds provided in this Act shall be used to pay the expenses of, or otherwise compensate, non-Federal parties intervening in regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. Nothing herein affects the authority of the Consumer Product Safety Commission pursuant to section 7 of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2056 et seq.).

SEC. 410. Except as otherwise provided under existing law, or under an existing Executive Order issued pursuant to an existing law, the obligation or expenditure of any appropriation under this Act for contracts for any consulting service shall be limited to contracts which are: (1) a matter of public record and available for public inspection; and (2) thereafter included in a publicly available list of all contracts entered into within twenty-four months prior to the date on which the list is made available to the public and of all contracts on which performance has not been completed by such date. The list required by the preceding sentence shall be updated quarterly and shall include a narrative description of the work to be performed under each such contract.

SEC. 411. Except as otherwise provided by law, no part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall be obligated or expended by any executive agency, as referred to in the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act (41 U.S.C. 401 et seq.), for a contract for services

unless such executive agency: (1) has awarded and entered into such contract in full compliance with such Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder; and (2) requires any report prepared pursuant to such contract, including plans, evaluations, studies, analyses and manuals, and any report prepared by the agency which is substantially derived from or substantially includes any report prepared pursuant to such contract, to contain information concerning: (A) the contract pursuant to which the report was prepared; and (B) the contractor who prepared the report pursuant to such contract.

SEC. 412. Except as otherwise provided in section 406, none of the funds provided in this Act to any department or agency shall be obligated or expended to provide a personal cook, chauffeur, or other personal servants to any officer or employee of such department or agency.

SEC. 413. None of the funds provided in this Act to any department or agency shall be obligated or expended to procure passenger automobiles as defined in 15 U.S.C. 2001 with an EPA estimated miles per gallon average of less than 22 miles per gallon.

SEC. 414. None of the funds appropriated in title I of this Act shall be used to enter into any new lease of real property if the estimated annual rental is more than \$300,000 unless the Secretary submits, in writing, a report to the Committees on Appropriations of the Congress and a period of 30 days has expired following the date on which the report is received by the Committees on Appropriations.

SEC. 415. (a) It is the sense of the Congress that, to the greatest extent practicable, all equipment and products purchased with funds made available in this Act should be American-made.

(b) In providing financial assistance to, or entering into any contract with, any entity using funds made available in this Act, the head of each Federal agency, to the greatest extent practicable, shall provide to such entity a notice describing the statement made in subsection (a) by the Congress.

SEC. 416. None of the funds appropriated in this Act may be used to implement any cap on reimbursements to grantees for indirect costs, except as published in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21.

SEC. 417. Such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2000 pay raises for programs funded by this Act shall be absorbed within the levels appropriated in this Act.

SEC. 418. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for any program, project, or activity, when it is made known to the Federal entity or official to which the funds are made available that the program, project, or activity is not in compliance with any Federal law relating to risk assessment, the protection of private property rights, or unfunded mandates.

SEC. 419. Corporations and agencies of the Department of Housing and Urban Development which are subject to the Government Corporation Control Act, as amended, are hereby authorized to make such expenditures, within the limits of funds and borrowing authority available to each such corporation or agency and in accord with law, and to make such contracts and commitments without regard to fiscal year limitations as provided by section 104 of the Act as may be necessary in carrying out the programs set forth in the budget for 2000 for such corporation or agency except as herein-after provided: *Provided*, That collections of these corporations and agencies may be used for new loan or mortgage purchase commitments only to the extent expressly provided for in this Act (unless such loans are in support of other forms of assistance provided for

in this or prior appropriations Acts), except that this proviso shall not apply to the mortgage insurance or guaranty operations of these corporations, or where loans or mortgage purchases are necessary to protect the financial interest of the United States Government.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the bill, title IV, sections 401 through 419, be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Are there any amendments to that portion of the bill?

If not, the Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

SEC. 420. Notwithstanding section 320(g) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(g)), funds made available pursuant to authorization under such section for fiscal year 2000 may be used for implementing comprehensive conservation and management plans.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word for the purposes of engaging in a colloquy with the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH).

Mr. Chairman, I had intended to introduce an amendment, but have elected not to do so because the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) has agreed to engage in a colloquy with me, and I appreciate his willingness to do so.

My amendment would have sought to extend for an additional year a provision that was included in the FY 1998 VA-HUD appropriation that states that the Federal share of grants awarded under title II of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act for publicly owned treatment works in the District of Columbia shall be 80 percent.

Currently the matching formula for water treatment projects in the District of Columbia is 80-20 because of a measure included 2 years ago by the VA-HUD chairman, at the time the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS). I have spoken directly with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), the Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and he has indicated his support.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman SHUSTER) has already indicated his willingness to work with me in devising permanent language that could be included in a clean water funding bill that the committee intends to consider shortly. I also have the support of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), the ranking member, for extending the provision.

The 80-20 match has been indispensable to the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority in helping it to undertake necessary capital improvements. I intend to work with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman SHUSTER) to obtain passage of legislation to make this change permanent.



In the meantime, however, the provision that was passed 2 years ago is set to expire on December 30, 1999. Therefore, I must seek an additional 1-year extension so that important projects that WASA will be undertaking next year will not be jeopardized because of lack of funding.

I would ask the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH), I understand that you would like additional time to consider my request for a 1-year extension and that you would be amenable to working with me to have language included in the VA-HUD conference report. Is that the gentleman's understanding?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Ms. NORTON. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, yes, that is my understanding. I recognize the importance of this provision to the District of Columbia, and I look very much forward to working with the gentleman in that regard.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his kind consideration.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BOEHLERT

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. BOEHLERT:

Page 93, line 6: strike the period and insert the following:

“, subject to enactment of legislation authorizing funds for such purpose.”

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Chairman, the amendment to section 420 on page 93 regards the usage of federal funds for comprehensive conservation and management plans for our national estuaries. That is a proper role for the Federal Government. All of us recognize that.

The Clean Water Act allows EPA national estuary program grants to be used for developing plans, not for implementing them. Section 420 would allow these grants to be used for implementation for FY 2000.

Section 420 constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI. However, we have talked with the chairman and ranking member and advised them that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is currently considering legislation to reauthorize the national estuary program. We are determined to do so, and we are moving with dispatch.

The proposed amendment would allow national estuary grants to be used for implementing plans, subject to passage of national estuary program reauthorization legislation.

I would urge its adoption. I would ask my colleagues to keep in mind that the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), the ranking member, are both supportive, and I would ask that they affirm that support at this time.

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Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BOEHLERT. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman of the subcommittee for the excellent work that the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) has done in my State and across the Nation in protecting our air, water, and land. He has provided great leadership, in the tradition of the great Theodore Roosevelt also from New York State.

We see this as a friendly amendment, and I can say from our side that we are prepared to accept it.

Mr. BOEHLERT. I thank the chairman for those good words.

I would ask the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) also if that is his understanding.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BOEHLERT. I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, it is indeed.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Chairman, I move the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that sections 421 through 423 be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of sections 421 through 423 is as follows:

SEC. 421. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the term “qualified student loan” with respect to national service education awards shall mean any loan made directly to a student by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, in addition to other meanings under section 148(b)(7) of the National and Community Service Act.

SEC. 422. Section 15d(a) of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 (16 U.S.C. 831n-4(a)) is amended by striking “30,000,000,000” and inserting in lieu thereof “27,000,000,000”.

SEC. 423. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to publish or issue an assessment required under section 106 of the Global Change Research Act of 1990 unless—

(1) the supporting research has been subjected to peer review and, if not otherwise publicly available, posted electronically for public comment prior to use in the assessment; and

(2) the draft assessment has been published in the Federal Register for a 60 day public comment period.

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to enter into a colloquy with the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), chairman of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations.

I rise today to discuss with the chairman of the subcommittee the need for a veterans outpatient clinic in the Seventh District of Georgia.

Mr. Chairman, currently there are 9 outpatient clinics located throughout Georgia. The Seventh District has one of the largest veterans population of any congressional district in the State. However, it does not have an outpatient clinic.

In the State of Georgia there are more than 667,000 veterans, and the Seventh District is home to many of those. Many of the constituents in my congressional district are veterans who must drive long distances to receive treatment. In 1998, many thousands of veterans from the Seventh District had to go to the VA hospital facility on the east side of Atlanta to receive medical treatment. For those veterans in the western-most portion of the Seventh District, that trip takes a complete day, beginning early in the morning.

Establishing an outpatient clinic in the Seventh Congressional District would provide a very important service to our veterans, and would relieve pressure from the other clinics and the veterans hospital in Atlanta. It would be extremely cost effective.

Over the last year I have been in contact with the chairman about the importance of this issue, and I am pleased the committee will look into this issue in the House-Senate conference.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BARR of Georgia. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for bringing this issue to the attention of the Committee, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I understand there is a need for a veterans' outpatient clinic in the 7th District of Georgia. I would like to assure the gentleman that I will work with him on this issue toward the establishment of a clinic in that county of Georgia as we move towards conference.

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the commitment of the chairman.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BARR of Georgia. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I have heard stories like the gentleman's all over the country. I say to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARR), about the needs of various districts and our veterans. They are real. I am glad that the gentleman is fighting for them.

We had a series of amendments yesterday that would have put the money in that would have allowed us to take care of that. The illogic of the position that is being argued by folks on the gentleman's side is that we have these needs but we are not going to put the money in to meet them.

So I sympathize with the gentleman and I voted to get the gentleman the money to have that outpatient clinic,

but nobody on the gentleman's side voted for the amendments that would have allowed that. So I do not understand how the gentleman can ask the chairman to take care of his needs and then not vote for the positions that would give the money to do that.

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I would like to express my appreciation for the support of the gentleman from California.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF MICHIGAN

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. SMITH of Michigan:

At the end of the bill before line 4, page 94, insert the following:

SEC. . Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the amount appropriated for Environmental Programs and Management for the Environmental Protection Agency is reduced by \$2,500,000 and the amount appropriated for Emergency Management Planning and Assistance for the Federal Emergency Management Agency is increased by \$2,500,000.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, the budget resolution, the authorization bill, H.R. 1550, and the FEMA director, James Lee Witt, all suggested that a \$5 million appropriation to the Fire Administration be authorized in order to implement certain changes in the Fire Administration.

I would like to suggest to my colleagues that this is a compromise. The appropriators took out the \$5 million. This amendment suggests that we move ahead with \$2.5 million to implement these changes in the Fire Administration. The director of FEMA, James Lee Witt, has said at least with the \$2.5 million they can move ahead and start making some changes necessary to help the first responders in this country.

We have 34,000 fire departments in this country. We have had very little support from the Federal Government. It has been suggested that, after all, it is already in this appropriation bill. There is a 20 percent increase in funding. The 20 percent is an increase from last year's \$25 million to this year's \$31 million, but they took out the \$5 million for this special project.

Compare this authorization with what we have given law enforcement; for example, \$1 billion for bulletproof vests in 1 year. What are we doing for our first responders? We make these first responders, 80 percent of whom are volunteers, do without any kind of support. We are now challenged in

every community, in every township, in every hamlet, in every village of continuing to encourage these volunteers to perform the kinds of public service that they have been performing. Let us make some changes, and let us start giving these men and women a little support from Washington, D.C.

Since its creation in 1974, the Fire Administration has had a notable impact on communities across the country. Between 1986 and 1995, for example, fire deaths decreased 30 percent and the adjusted dollar losses associated with the fires decreased by 13 percent. Much of this decrease can be traced to research sponsored by the United States Fire Administration.

Earlier I had mentioned \$1 billion to law enforcement for deaths. Last year we had about 200 deaths of law enforcement officers performing their duties. Last year we had 100 deaths of first responders, firemen trying to do their duty, and again, 80 percent of those individuals are volunteers, with little or no support.

We are talking about \$2.5 billion. The \$5 million was taken out. We are now talking about \$2.5 million, at least starting down this road to help these first responders.

Losses from fire, I would call to the Members' attention, remain unacceptably high. During the period 1986 to 1995 period, an average of 2.1 million fires have been reported annually, and fires cost an average of 5,000 civilian deaths, 25,000 injuries, and \$9.6 billion in losses each year.

Moreover, the United States has one of the highest fire death rates in the industrialized world, 15.6 deaths per million in population, higher than Australia, Japan, western Europe.

Mr. Chairman, we can and we must do better. I think this is a very modest request to move ahead with what needs to happen in the U.S. Fire Administration for them to do a better job servicing the 34,000 fire departments in our communities and the 1.2 million first responders that are trying to help their communities in protecting the environment, protecting from loss of life, protecting from loss of property.

A recent report by the blue ribbon panel made up of representatives of the fire service community spoke of a broken covenant between the Federal fire programs and the people and institutions they were created to serve. They listed 34 recommendations to improve the United States Fire Administration. At the top of the list was additional funding. This is a serious and earnest effort on the part of these stakeholders to bring about a positive change for the Fire Administration.

Mr. Chairman, the budget, the attorneys team Bill H.R. 155, and FEMA Director James Lee Witt all suggested a \$5 million appropriation to implement certain changes. Since its creation in 1974, the Fire Administration has had a notable impact on communities across the country. Between 1986 and 1995, for example, fire deaths decreased 30 percent, and

the adjusted dollar loss associated with fire decreased 13 percent. Much of this decrease can be traced to research sponsored by USFA that led to affordable smoke detectors.

Nevertheless, losses from fire remain unacceptably high. Over the same 1986 to 1995 period, an average of 2.1 million fires were reported annually, and fires caused an average of 5,100 civilian deaths, 25,000 injuries, and \$9.6 billion in losses each year. Moreover, the United States has one of the highest fire death rates in the industrialized world—15.6 deaths per million in population—higher than in Australia, Japan, and most of Western Europe.

Mr. Chairman, we can and must do better, both for our citizens and for the firefighters who regularly put their lives on the line—80 percent of whom serve as volunteers. In an age where the word "hero" has been debased, firefighters still command the respect and thanks of the communities they serve, and rightly so. About 100 lose their lives every year in duty-related incidents.

However, a recent report by the Blue Ribbon Panel, made up of representatives of the fire-services community, spoke of a "broken covenant between the federal fire programs and the people and institutions they were created to serve." They listed 34 recommendations to improve the United States Fire Administration. At the top of their list was additional funding. This is a serious and earnest effort on the part of these stakeholders to bring about positive change—to increase funding for the USFA while at the same time hold it accountable for its own performance.

The authorization that we passed overwhelmingly in this House provided this funding.

It also required the USFA to prepare a five-year plan on how the funding will be spent. It channeled new funding into the National Fire Academy for counterterrorism training for first responders and called for a review of National Fire Academy courses to ensure that they are up-to-date and complement, not duplicate, courses of instruction offered elsewhere.

This amendment restores the \$2.5 million out of the \$5 million requested necessary to achieve these goals.

It makes funding available to USFA through the FEMA "Emergency Management Planning and Assistance" account. It offsets this spending through a decrease in funding for the environmental protection Agency's "Environmental Programs and Management" account—a \$1.8 billion account filled with earmarked programs not requested by the EPA. As Chairman of the Basic Research Subcommittee, it's important to me that we spend money on projects that meet the standards of competition and peer review.

A sum of less than 1/10 of one percent from this account is reasonable to help this country's first responders.

Mr. Chairman, by funding the United States Fire Administration, this amendment has the potential of saving countless numbers of lives, significantly reducing physical injuries and decreasing the dollar amount of damages caused by fire and other forms of disasters. I would personally like to thank everyone from the fire service who has offered their support to me throughout this budget process. But more importantly, I would like to thank all 1.2 million first responders for their dedication and commitment to duty, and offer my best wishes for their continued success and safety.

I ask for your support on this amendment.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in reluctant opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. Chairman, this surely is a worthy program. There is broad support certainly for fire prevention training. That is why the Committee on Appropriations increased the budget of FEMA's fire prevention training by 20 percent.

We have discussed and debated this bill for about 10 hours now, and we have seen clearly throughout the debate the difficult choices that we had. There is no other area, clearly, of this budget that has had a 20 percent increase. So it is a priority for the committee.

Mr. Chairman, the budget last year was about \$25 million. This year it would be \$31.4 million, under this budget, an increase of \$6 million, \$6 million that could have been used in any number of other programs that any number of other amendments would have affected.

FEMA had proposed an increase of over 45 percent for this budget item, but the committee could not support such an increase. The efforts of FEMA to overhaul and improve the United States Fire Administration are to be commended, but we should not smother the program with funding which may be not used effectively. How many times have we seen the Federal Government throw money at a problem, only to create more problems?

This would be a substantial increase for any budget. We need to give the agency time to implement the recommendations of the blue ribbon panel on the U.S. Fire Administration. While FEMA requested more money than this bill provides, the committee feels that slowing down the pace of implementation will be best for the program in the long run.

We remain committed to working with FEMA to implement changes in the Fire Administration, but we do not feel a funding increase of 45 percent in one year is merited.

Mr. Chairman, I would urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALSH. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Just to point out the percentages again, we had \$25 million last year. The request was for \$36 million. That was a 40 percent increase. We ended up with \$5 million less than that. It seems that using percentages does not really reflect the contribution of the Federal Government to what is a very huge, serious contribution; again, 34,000 fire departments, over 1.2 million first responders, 80 percent of whom are volunteers, and to implement the blue ribbon committee we need that money.

Mr. WALSH. Reclaiming my time, the percentages do show a scale of in-

crease in this budget. No matter how we cut it, a 20 percent increase in any budget is very substantial. It would be difficult, quite frankly, to manage.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in reluctant opposition to the gentleman's amendment. In this amendment, my friend, the gentleman from Michigan, proposes to give the resources needed for the U.S. Fire Administration to implement changes called for in a recent Blue Ribbon Panel report.

The panel focused on the need to improve management activities, to appoint a Chief Operating Officer, and to establish a stronger mission statement.

Mr. Chairman, FEMA director James Lee Witt and the Fire Administrator, Carrye Brown, both support the changes recommended by the panel. Indeed, these changes are already being implemented.

Let me emphasize my very strong support for the activities of the Fire Administration. I know the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) shares my desire to provide the resources needed to implement the panel's report, and I look forward to working with him to do so as this process moves forward.

However, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) has characterized this offset as coming from EPA's administrative account. What has not been made clear is that this account also happens to contain almost all of EPA's programmatic funding.

The cut could mean reductions in air and water protection, compliance assistance activities, pesticide registration, educational activities. As I said, this is EPA's programmatic account, and it will cut deeply, because EPA's funding is marginal in these activities. Those marginal cuts, while they may seem small, loom large when they get down to the programmatic level.

EPA is already underfunded in these areas, and this cut could impact it adversely. Therefore, I must oppose the amendment. At the same time, I want to restate my support for FEMA, for the Fire Administration, and for our country's first responders, and to working with the gentleman as this process moves forward to try to get adequate funding in this very important program.

I commend the gentleman for his efforts here, and reluctantly oppose his amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MOLLOHAN. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

□ 1430

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) for yielding to me just a second just, again, to make clear that, from that account, it is a \$1.8 billion account, out of that \$1.8 billion, roughly one-tenth of 1 percent we are asking be transferred to an area that can tremendously help environ-

mental needs. So it is a very small portion of that \$1.8 billion.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, it is indeed, and I acknowledge that. The point is that the gentleman is operating at the margins of accounts that are underfunded already, so it has dramatic impacts, not only programmatic, but also employment impacts at this point.

All of these accounts are underfunded in this whole bill. That is the principal purpose of opposing most of these amendments. We are operating on the margins. We need additional allocation. We need additional headroom in the caps. We need to do something with the budget resolution. These amendments are cutting accounts that cannot afford to be cut because they are already underfunded.

While it is an attractive argument to point out that the gentleman's amendment only cuts a small percentage across the board in these accounts, and that is true, it has dramatic effects because these accounts are already at the margins and unacceptably underfunded.

So, again, I hope that we get money in this bill as we move forward. I would certainly join the Chairman in working with the gentleman in ensuring that there are additional funds in this very worthy undertaking.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote, and pending that, I make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SANDERS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. SANDERS: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

RURAL VETERANS HEALTH CARE SERVICES

SEC. \_\_. The House supports efforts to implement improvements in health care services for veterans in rural areas.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, this amendment expresses the Congress' support of efforts to improve rural health care delivery for our veterans, and I believe it is absolutely non-controversial.

It is imperative that the special needs of veterans living in rural areas are recognized and that the particular problems associated with delivery of VA health care in rural areas often in face of shrinking resources are addressed.

I would like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the

gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), the ranking member, for what I understand is their support of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Vermont for his constructive amendment. We believe, just as he does, that rural health care services for veterans are extremely important and consider this a friendly amendment, and we are willing to accept it on our side.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) who is also sympathetic to this, as I understand.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am very sympathetic, being from a rural area.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, the problems facing veterans all over this country and especially in rural areas are very serious, and I think this amendment is helpful.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY Mr. HINCHEY

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. HINCHEY:

At the end of the bill, insert after the last section (preceding the short title) the following new section:

SEC. —. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to implement or administer the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation system.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Chairman, in offering this amendment, I mean to infer no criticism of the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the subcommittee who has put this bill together under some very, very difficult circumstances and I think in many ways has done an excellent job, particularly in providing additional funds for veterans.

However, there is criticism to be offered in the way that the Veterans Administration is implementing a reallocation of existing resources. It is arguable that the resources are totally inadequate and will continue to be so after the large infusion of funds which are contained in this bill should the bill become law.

Nevertheless, VERA, in its allocation of these funds, is doing a grave disservice to certain veterans in certain parts of the country. In the initial phase of the implementation of this reallocation of resources, the veterans who are being injured the most initially are those who reside in the northeastern portion of the country. Those injuries are now spreading to other parts of the country and are being experienced by veterans in the midwest and elsewhere.

So we are calling upon the Veterans Administration in this amendment to cease and desist in the reallocation of

these resources until such time as it can be adequately discerned what damages are being done and how best to use the resources that are available for veterans health care.

The VA is currently operating on the basis of a simple computer model, and that computer model does not adequately take into consideration the needs of veterans, the special circumstances that they may have, the environment in which the health care services are being delivered, and a host of other variables.

The consequence of that is that veterans in health care settings in a growing number of areas across the country are not getting the quality of care that they deserve and which the Congress wants them to have and which every American wants them to have.

Now it may be that veterans in some parts of the country have not been injured by this reallocation formula yet, but we have experienced a growing number of veterans being injured as a result of this reallocation formula over the last several years.

The initial negative impacts began to show up in the New York metropolitan area in 1996. Since then, they have spread through New England and down the East Coast and across Pennsylvania and into the Ohio region in the midwest. So if my colleagues have not yet begun to experience with their veterans the negative impacts of VERA, they need not wait too much longer, because those negative impacts will begin to express themselves almost invariably as a result of this formula, which is a blind formula totally without concern or care for the quality of health care that is being delivered in many parts of the country as a result.

So it is no less than prudent for us to intercede, to step in, and to say that this formula should not go further until we have a better and clearer understanding of its full impacts, and that we can develop a formula for allocation which will be in keeping with the needs of veterans and ensure that they get the quality of care that they deserve.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to rise today along with the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY), who has just spoken, to offer this amendment to suspend the Department of Veterans Affairs VERA formula.

We are joined by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRANKS), the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BASS), the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN), the gentleman from New York (Mrs. KELLY), and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) in offering this amendment today.

This amendment is about fairness, about treating all veterans equally regardless of where they live. After all, these veterans, all veterans served our

country together, not from any particular region or particular State.

When VERA was implemented in April of 1997, without, I believe, adequate public discussion and education among veterans throughout the country, it began shifting funds away from some areas of the country such as the Northeast to other regions like the South and West. The VA claimed it was moving the money to where the veterans are. In the process, the VA left many of our veterans behind.

Why should a veteran in one part of the country receive better services than a veteran in a different part of the country simply because of where they chose to live?

VERA is destructive public policy. The program redirects money from areas where existing elderly populations, with increasing needs for care, to areas with developing veterans population that have similar needs. In the end, this program has done nothing more than pit veterans in one region of the country against veterans in other parts of the country.

Let me tell my colleagues what VERA has meant for veterans in my congressional district. VERA has meant that security stations in the psychiatric ward in Lyons VA Medical Center are often empty or undermanned. VERA has meant fewer doctors and nurses working more overtime to care for patients at Lyons and East Orange Medical Centers. VERA has led to the closure of the Lyons emergency room and the severe cutback in services in pharmaceutical help.

For the past 2 years, my area, VISN 3 in New York and New Jersey, has taken the biggest cuts under VERA. But New Jersey has the second oldest veterans population in the Nation after Florida. The veterans in my State are often older, sicker, and poorer than veterans that live elsewhere in the country.

I know this from having visited these veterans time and time again at these hospitals. The Lyons VA Hospital treats over 250 aging vets in its nursing home, many of whom are confined to wheelchairs. Further, every bed in the Alzheimer's unit is filled. I have visited these patients and can say that each one of these men deserve a great deal of care and rightly so.

Finally, Lyons has several inpatient units for treating posttraumatic stress disorder and other serious mental illnesses. This care is far more complex and far more expensive than outpatient treatment sought by many veterans in other parts of the country.

But it is not just my area, VISN 3, that is treated unfairly under VERA. Last year, under the formula, seven Integrated Service Networks, or VISNs, lost money. Parts of Massachusetts, New York State, New Jersey, New York, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Colorado, Montana, Utah, Wyoming, parts of California and Nevada.

Even with a record \$1.7 billion increase for veterans medical care in this

appropriations bill under discussion today, some VISNs, and the veterans who live there, will receive no additional funding while other regions will receive large funding increases.

During our subcommittee's hearing in April, I asked Secretary West how much VISN 3 would receive if Congress increased the President's budget request by \$1.5 billion. He could not answer me then. But in a written response, the VA admitted that for VISN 3 to break even in fiscal year 2000, we would have to increase the President's level by \$2.4 billion.

Further, according to the VA's own numbers, VISN 3 will lose \$40 million in fiscal year 2000 even with the \$1.7 billion increase. As a result of VERA, VISN 13, which includes Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota will lose over \$8 million. While veterans in these States will be denied services and face restricted access to care, veterans in other parts of the country will benefit from the increased allocation, up to \$129 million.

Our amendment to suspend the implementation of VERA is on target because it will give Congress the time to evaluate the program's consequences on the quality of health care for all veterans. It is our duty and responsibility to fully explore the impact of VERA on veterans medical care and to ascertain the fairness of the formula and what distribution of funds under VERA actually means for patient care.

VERA is not the answer to the VA's funding problems. As I stated earlier, all VERA has done since it was implemented has been to create regional battles for diminishing funds.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of this amendment for the reasons that have been outlined by my other colleagues, especially the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

I come from Albany, New York, home of the Samuel S. Stratton VA Medical Center. I have seen the adverse impacts of this program in my community: Fewer services to veterans, fewer jobs for health care workers at that particular facility.

But let me just address the more global concern that I have. Have we lost all of our priorities around here? Do we not realize that we would not have the privilege of going around bragging about how we live in the freest and most open democracy on the face of the earth had it not been for the men and women who wore the uniform of the United States military through the years. Have we forgotten that?

My brother died in the service. He did not have a chance to come back and take advantage of benefits to veterans. He came back in a casket. But think about all the others who put their lives on the line, came back disabled, and need help, especially in their later years.

□ 1445

Think of all those who just served and took the chance that they might lose their life so that they could defend what we stand for here in the United States; yes, the freest and most open democracy on the face of the earth; the beacon for freedom for people all around the world.

I will never forget as long as I live being in Armenia on their independence day. I traveled throughout the northern part of that country, and I watched people stand in line for hours to get in for that privilege to vote for the first time ever. And then when they finished voting, they would not even go home. They had these little banquets at every polling place celebrating what happened. But what was most uplifting about it all was to be with them the next day in the streets of Yerevan as they celebrated and danced and shouted and sang "Long live free and independent Armenia." And then they said, "The example of what we want to be like is the United States of America." That is what they said. And on that particular day I was never more proud to be an American.

We should be proud to be Americans today and be proud of the people who went before us and put their lives on the line so that we could be enjoying all the blessings that we enjoy today. And we are failing in that regard. I ask my colleagues to think about that as they contemplate this amendment and support our veterans by supporting the Hinchey amendment.

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I listened to the last Speaker make his points about serving our veterans. I think defeat of the Hinchey amendment serves our veterans as intended by the Congress and by those who are subject to movement in this country. The veterans populations that are moving out of the northeast and going elsewhere, to the south and the west, would be disserved by this amendment. So I rise in opposition to the Hinchey amendment. This would block continued implementation of the VERA system, a change that would cripple the VA.

An identical amendment was offered last year. It failed in this House by a vote of 146 to 285. The House has spoken on this issue previously, and it has been against the position taken by the author of this amendment and those who support it.

On April 1, 1997, Mr. Chairman, the VA began to implement the VERA system, which allocates health care resources according to the numbers of veterans in each of the 22 regional VISNs, the Veterans Integrated Service Networks. The Hinchey amendment would jeopardize health care in the majority of VA networks by blocking continued implementation of this system. Before VERA, funds were allocated according to the historical usage of VA facilities adjusted annually for infla-

tion. When veterans migrated to the west and the south, funding continued to be concentrated in the northeast.

The VERA system directly matches workloads with annual allocations, taking into account numbers of basic and special care veterans, national price and wage differences, and education and equipment differences. More efficient networks have more funds available for local initiatives and less efficient networks have an incentive to improve. Some regions do see a substantial change in their health care allocations under VERA, but all VA network administrators agree this reform is crucial to the sustainability of VA programs.

Last August, the General Accounting Office reviewed the VERA system in response to congressional direction in last year's VA bill. Overall, VISN 3 and VISN 4, and the VA nationally, have increased the numbers of veterans served. Increased the numbers of veterans served. As measured by patient satisfaction, access to care also has improved, according to surveys. The report notes that the two VISNs, 3 and 4, increased veterans access to care despite reductions in the buying power of their allocations by increasing the efficiency of their health care delivery system. That is the issue here. That is how the system is intended to work.

The GAO also concluded that greater oversight of the system is required. And that is good also. But the goals of VERA, to reduce inequities and allow the VA to serve more veterans, are being met.

This amendment proposes to prohibit funding for the VERA allocation model, creating a significant question about what model the VA would use instead. Presumably the authors of the amendment would support a return to the allocations of 1996. Compared to fiscal year 1999, allocations of such an adjustment would mean 17 of the 22 VISNs would lose money. Some areas would be particularly devastated by such a reallocation. The Pacific Northwest, my district, my region, would be cut by 16 percent; the Southeast by 14 to 16 percent; the Southwest would be cut 17 percent.

To restore funding to these 5 VISNs at fiscal year 1996 levels, all other 17 VISNs would take an approximate hit totaling \$220 million. If VA was forced to recompute allocations according to the old model, the cuts would be even more severe. The two VA medical centers I represent would see their budgets cut by more than \$9 million this year if we restored the old formula. What does that do to my veterans? I respect the comments about other veterans, but this hurts veterans no matter what. Such a bigger hit would cripple the vast majority of VISNs across the country.

I believe we should encourage the VA to continue moving forward with this successful initiative. We should oppose the Hinchey amendment. And if my colleagues are from any of these other

States, Southwest, South or West, they should oppose this. Because it is essentially saying go back to the old system and perpetuate inefficiency in some of these veterans areas.

So where the veterans are going, the veterans are receiving money for their health care, and that is appropriate. If there are fewer veterans in the Northeast and more veterans in the South and the West, the South and the West ought to get more allocation to help the veterans' health care needs of those regions.

I have the greatest respect for the authors of this amendment and those who have spoken in favor of it, but freezing the existing system or changing it dramatically, as I think this amendment would, is a disservice to veterans nationally. It may argue in favor of the veterans in that region, but it hurts the veterans nationally. I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment as the House has done in the past.

Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. BASS. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey. I yield to the gentleman from New Hampshire.

Mr. BASS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Hinchey-Frelinghuysen amendment.

Mr. Chairman, before I begin, let me say that I don't doubt the sincerity of any Member's commitment to our veterans. The increase in veterans health care and service funding that this appropriation provides is truly historic. I commend Chairman WALSH and the members of the subcommittee on their work and dedication to the budget resolution's priorities.

Earlier this year, each Member should have received the 1999 VERA allocations book. It states on page 9 that "A major premise of VERA is that networks receiving relatively fewer funds will adjust by becoming more efficient—not by reducing services or numbers of veterans served."

If you consider that many of the networks in the Northeast and the Midwest are already among the most efficient providers of veterans care in the country, then you can clearly see the problem with this premise. For these networks, there is no way to adjust without reducing services or numbers of veterans served.

The facts are clear. The quantity and quality of the health care services in the Northeast and Midwest have declined. These veterans deserve better.

VERA was supposed to improve care, not harm it. VERA was supposed to tailor the allocations to each of the 22 networks based on the region's labor costs, veteran population, patient classification, facility condition, and other factors. Instead, it has led to a veteran against veteran, region against region competition. It has to stop.

Since fiscal year 1996, VISN 1, the network for all of New England, has faced an 8 percent reduction in resource allocations. During the same time, Congress has increased the total allocation by over 5 percent.

Congress and the VA should work together to find a better method of providing this critical

care and determining resource allocations. I urge support for this amendment.

Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I rise today as a cosponsor of the Frelinghuysen-Hinchey amendment.

The Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation is anything but what its name implies. VERA is indeed not equitable. In fact, it has had a disastrous impact on veterans health care in New Jersey. VERA was intended to direct the VA health resources to the areas of the highest veterans population. However, the VERA equation fails to calculate the level of care required by the patients.

VISN 3, of which my district is a part, has the second oldest veteran population in the United States. Clearly, these veterans have a greater need for medical care and pay the highest health care costs of all veterans, yet they will suffer from across-the-board cuts to their programs. Even with a \$1.7 billion increase over the President's budget, VISN 3 will lose \$40 million. Meanwhile, VISN 8, in Florida, which has legitimate needs, will receive an increase of \$129 million. Mr. Chairman, that does not sound like equity to me.

Not only is the level of support provided to New Jersey veterans unfair, it is jeopardizing their health condition. Lyons as well as East Orange Hospital Centers have closed their pharmacies. There have been round after round of RIFs in both New York and New Jersey veteran hospitals. VERA has been a failure when measured against the health care needs of our veterans.

I urge my colleagues to support the Frelinghuysen-Hinchey amendment. Send the Veterans Administration back to the drawing board on this proposal. America's veterans deserve no less.

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of this amendment offered by my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), to support the reconsideration of VERA. This issue of VERA concerns many lives in the State of Maine as it pertains to veterans in particular but their families throughout the State also. I ask today that the House recognize the adverse effects of the VERA and how it appears to be having an adverse effect on many of my constituents and the constituents of many others in this body.

The Togas VA facility in Maine serves almost all Maine veterans and has felt the impact of stringent funding levels, which is referred to as region VISN 1. There have been more veterans seeking health services from VA Togas since VERA has been instituted, not fewer. But because of VERA, the resources are continuing to squeeze the VA's health care services. There has not been any study in regards to the

rural impact of VERA and what it has done not just to Maine but other parts of rural America and its impact on veterans and veterans' health care.

Maine veterans expressed a significant level of anxiety about the present and future level of care at the Togas facility. And when we have asked our veterans to sacrifice, and to make the ultimate sacrifice by possibly laying down their lives down in defense of our country with the guarantee of health care for themselves, and then to be put into a situation where we are continuing, over a gradual period of time, of taking away those resources and not giving the veterans the health care protection that we had promised them when they had made their commitment to serve their country, I think gets at one of the underpinnings and foundation that has made America strong. We have to reinforce that and make sure we maintain our commitment to veterans.

My district is overwhelmingly rural, with many veterans finding that they cannot receive certain services in Maine. And asking a veteran to travel across the strait is enough of a burden, but many veterans are forced to travel to Boston, the hub of a network serving New England States for health care services. Mr. Chairman, in my State there is 22 million acres of land, over 3,500 miles of a rock-bound coast. In some parts of Maine there is more wildlife than life. And in that State, where it takes 5 to 7 hours to cover from one end to the other, asking veterans to then travel further downstate, enduring many long hours of travel, being away from their family and friends for support, I think is unconscionable. And I am very concerned that this VERA system may exacerbate this situation and it may not be helping the veterans, as we have seen in our experiences in Maine and throughout the country, as evidenced by the speakers here on both sides of the aisle in support of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask the House to support this amendment.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the amendment being offered by my colleagues, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), to prohibit any funds from being used to implement the Veterans Equity Resource Allocation system known as VERA.

VERA was created to correct a perceived inequity in the manner in which veterans' health care dollars were being distributed across our Nation. While a noble effort, VERA was fundamentally flawed in that it did not look at the type of care being delivered

to veterans in given regions. Furthermore, it also failed to consider the effect of regional costs of providing health care in its calculations.

Under VERA, the watchword was efficiency; deliver the most care at the least cost. That sounds wonderful if the subject under discussion is outpatient care. But by forcing a one-size-fits-all solution to the problem, VERA has unfairly penalized those VISNs that provide vital services, such as substance abuse treatment, services for homeless veterans, mental health services, and spinal cord injury treatments. Under VERA, these services are all deemed too expensive and inefficient.

VERA was also implemented at a time when the VA's budget was essentially flatlined. Thus, VISN directors were not provided additional funds to offset the cost of annual pay raises for their VA staff as well as annual medical inflation costs.

□ 1500

This was not a problem for those directors of VISNs that received money under VERA. However, for those directors in VISNs like our VISN 3 in New York, that were losing money under VERA, this was a double hit that crowded out additional funds needed for other vital services.

Mr. Chairman, it is commendable that the subcommittee was able to find an additional \$1.7 billion for our veterans' medical care. Yet, thanks to VERA, none of that money will find its way to the Northeast where it is vitally needed. Instead, it is going to be spent in those VISNs that have already seen increases in funding due to VERA.

Mr. Chairman, this is wrong and it is inequitable. The veterans of the Northeast, who are older, sicker, and less mobile than their counterparts in the Sunbelt, should not be unfairly penalized for where they choose to live.

This amendment starts to correct this problem by terminating VERA, a well-intentioned but poorly executed system that blatantly discriminates against those veterans who reside in the Northeast.

Accordingly, Mr. Chairman, I urge our colleagues to support the Hinchey-Frelinghuysen amendment to bring adequate health care to our veterans.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, let me say, I rise in opposition to the amendment. Frankly, what would happen here is we are turning back the clock. They would be distributing funds where veterans are not located. The whole idea was to actually have the funds go where the veterans are located.

In Public Law 104-204, it was mandated that the VA medical care funds should be equitably distributed throughout the country to ensure that veterans have similar access to care regardless of the region where they live.

Responding to that directive, the VA developed the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation system, which we

call "VERA." In essence, this simply calls for distributing funds fairly based upon geographics, based upon the number of patients which VA medical centers in that region have treated.

The VERA system recognizes that there is a variability within the VA health care system. It makes simple adjustments for variations in labor costs. So the opponents to this say it has not made these variable adjustments for labor costs, it is already in VERA. It is also for research and education. So all the factors are already in here.

When I hear my colleague from New York say the people in the North are less mobile than the people down South, now, that is not true. The people down South have the same problems as the people up North. The fact is that there are more of them.

This amendment from my good friend would bar VA from distributing fiscal year 2000 funds under a system designed to achieve equity and reward efficiency. The amendment does not answer the key question, and this is a key question: What would he replace with VERA?

Presumably, its proponents want VA to reinstitute a truly inequitable system. So what they are asking for by supporting the Hinchey amendment is an inequitable system, not based upon geographics where all the veterans are going. They are ignoring population changes.

There is not one person that is for the Hinchey amendment that cannot tell me there has not been a population redistribution to the South. Patient utilization and hospital efficiency.

So this simply takes into effect all the factors of labor cost and research and education and basically puts the funds where geographically they should be located.

If this amendment passed, we are talking about chaos in the system. Its proponents aim to bail out the one network which would have less funding in fiscal year 2000 than fiscal year 1999. To cure that problem, their amendment would create problems for veterans in virtually every region of this country.

So, my colleagues, it is important to appreciate that, under VERA, VA has maintained a reserve fund, a reserve fund to alleviate special financial problems which individual networks encounter. No one has talked about this reserve fund.

So I say to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) he can go to get that reserve fund and get some of the funds there to help the individual hospital. So I encourage him and others to pursue a remedy for this network, if needed, through the reserve fund. Go to the reserve fund that was set up under VERA to handle the problems that my colleague and people from New York and New Jersey are talking about.

Do not unravel a system that is working, a system that is working for the veterans of this country, and the funds are now going where the veterans

are going and it is geographically distributed.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STEARNS. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

First of all, I want to answer the question of my colleague. What we would replace it with is an equitable system, something that is fair and reasonable.

The problem is that we have in VERA a system that is inequitable and unfair. It is not that I do not want to recognize the fact that the population of veterans in Florida is growing. Of course we do. And we want all of those veterans to be taken care of.

I elicit the sympathy of my colleague for the veterans in New York and New Jersey and Pennsylvania and Rhode Island and Maine and Ohio. I appreciate the sympathy of my colleague for the veterans in Florida. Share that sympathy with other veterans in other parts of the country.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, the point is the geographic location, that the veterans are coming to the South more than the North. The funds have been distributed on that basis, as well as labor cost, research, and education; and we have set up a reserve fund.

My question to my colleague, which he can answer on his own time, is why does he not go to the reserve fund and try to get his money for these individual problems rather than creating chaos by eliminating a system that a blue ribbon commission has looked at. This is a far-reaching analysis to come up with this redistribution of the funds for the veterans in the geographic locations that need them.

The basic problem is, which we both agree, is that we need more funding for the veterans, and on that I can agree with my colleague.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support for the Hinchey amendment.

Under the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation plan, I have witnessed the effects of a \$226-million cut to the lower New York area veterans network.

After careful study of VERA, I have come to the conclusion that it is flawed. These flaws permeate VERA's methodology, its implementation, and the VA's oversight of this new spending plan.

It is unfortunate that the VERA plan imposed upon our VA facilities is not one that provides proper funding to VA facilities but one to steal from Peter to pay Paul or to take from some VA facilities to give to others.

The gentleman was referring to the reserve fund. In fact, in the Northeast,



in VISN 3, that fund has had to be made available to the New York State area for the last 2 years because we keep running out of money in New York.

Before us today we have the VA-HUD Appropriations bill that contains the largest ever increase in medical care funding, \$1.7 billion. And for this we have an excellent committee to thank.

Unfortunately, under the VERA program, even with this increase in size, the New York-New Jersey area will not see one dime of additional funding. In fact, according to the director of our VA network, we will in effect take a cut of \$124 million.

This \$124 million includes the mandated \$40.6 million VERA cut, the rising cost of medical inflation that runs at 2 percent a year in our area, and the new mandate for hepatitis C coverage.

Let me speak to that point for a moment. I work here every day to provide new essential services to our veterans, such as the hepatitis C coverage, and to give many men and women who work in our VA hospitals a reasonable cost-of-living increase. But if we are going to do this, we must provide the funding necessary. Without any funds to cover these costs, the only option is to cut other services or reduce the quality of care provided.

It is wrong for us to pass new mandates on our VA hospitals without providing them the funding necessary to properly implement them. Please join me in returning common sense to VA funding methodology and vote for this amendment.

While VERA is supposed to promote more efficient and effective delivery of care, I am seeing the exact opposite occur at our veterans hospitals in my area. The staff is wonderfully caring and committed, but the VA is not supporting them, lowering their morale and making their jobs all the harder.

I beseech my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the Hinchey amendment and make the necessary investment into veterans hospitals in order to keep our promise of our care for our veterans. The veterans of this Nation gave their best for us. Now we need to do our best for them.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words, and I rise in opposition to the Hinchey amendment.

Mr. Chairman, VERA, as it is called, corrects historic geographic imbalances in funding for VA health care services and ensures equitable access to care for all veterans.

Long ago, Mr. Chairman, our Nation made a commitment to care for the brave men and women who fought the battles to keep America free. These are our Nation's veterans. Please take note when I say, "our Nation's veterans." They are not Florida's veterans or Arizona's veterans or New York's veterans. They are our veterans, and we as a Nation have a collective responsibility to honor the commitment we make to them.

When they volunteered to fight for America's freedom, no one asked these veterans what part of the country they came from. It simply did not matter. Unfortunately, when they came home, veterans found out that where they live matters a great deal. Until the passage of VERA, a veteran's ability to access the VA health care system literally depended upon where he or she happened to live.

Since coming to Congress, and I am sure this is true for most of us, I have heard of veterans that were denied care at Florida VA medical facilities. In many instances, these veterans had been receiving care at their local VA medical center. However, once they moved to Florida, the VA was forced to turn them away because the facilities in our State simply did not have the resources to meet the high demand for care.

This lack of adequate resources is further compounded in the winter months when Florida veterans are literally crowded out of the system by individuals who travel south to enjoy our warm weather.

It is hard for my veterans to understand how they could lose their VA health care simply by moving to another part of the country or because a veteran from a different State is using our VA facilities.

Congress enacted VERA for a very simple reason, equity. No matter where they live or what circumstances they face, all veterans deserve to have equal access to quality health care. Since VERA's implementation, the Florida Veterans' Integrated Service Network, VISN, has treated approximately 44,410 more veterans. The Florida network estimates that it will treat a total of 285,000 veterans by the end of fiscal year 1999.

The Florida network has also opened 12 new community based outpatient clinics since VERA's implementation. It plans to open additional clinics in the near future. None of this could have happened without VERA. We have to ask ourselves, what happens if VERA is not implemented?

The failure to move forward with an improved and fair funding allocation system would mean that the VA would miss a unique opportunity to revitalize its way of doing business. The negative impact would be felt most by veterans who would not be treated in areas that are currently underfunded. Failure to implement VERA will waste taxpayers' dollars because a rush to the funding practices of the past will mean that some VA facilities will receive more money per veteran than others to provide essentially the same care.

The author of this amendment argues that veterans of New York are not being treated equitably. The VERA system already takes regional differences into account by making adjustments for labor costs, differences in patient mix, and differing levels of support for research and education.

With the \$1.7 billion increase in VA health care included in H.R. 2684, VA

facilities in the metropolitan New York area will receive an average of \$5,336 per veteran patient. This means that these facilities will receive an average payment for each patient that is 16.11 percent higher than the national average.

On the other hand, the Florida VISN will receive \$4,481 per patient, an average payment which is 2.49 percent below the national average. How is this inequitable to New York's veterans?

If the Hinchey amendment passes, continued funding imbalances will result in unequal access to VA health care for veterans in different parts of the country.

I urge my colleagues to vote against the Hinchey amendment.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Chairman, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

The only inequity that the people from New York will suffer would be, if this amendment passes, when they move down to Florida, then they will see what the inequity is.

The mathematics is very clear. I hope my colleagues will listen to the gentleman from Florida. This is just a question of fairness, of basic fairness, and it is a question I think that all of us should ask for ourselves. Are the veterans who live in the Sunbelt entitled to less than those who stayed in the more populated areas that have not grown?

□ 1515

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to offer a modest proposal. We have obviously a very controversial amendment here. We have spent about half an hour discussing it so far. This has taken at least as much time as any amendment, and I understand there are very deep and passionate interests on the part of all Members.

What I would like to suggest, in the interest of time and expediency, we have the opportunity to finish this bill fairly soon. As a matter of fact, when this debate is concluded, there will be a vote on the amendment of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) and on, I presume, the Hinchey amendment. Then we would come back after that and conclude the debate on the remaining amendments.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the Members who are interested in discussing this limit their time to 3 minutes as opposed to the 5-minute rule.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Objection, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Objection is heard.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, as my colleagues on the floor can see, this is a very important issue in Florida. I think the entire Florida delegation is down here to speak on this issue. I might say that I think the reason we feel so passionately about it is because many of us were on the other end of this issue not but 5 years ago, 4 years ago, where our veterans were coming into our offices telling us that they could not get into the VA hospital; they could not get the health care that had been promised to them. So by the very nature, this has risen to be such a huge issue.

Now, on top of that, since the VERA has been implemented, I have to say people come in and say for the first time they are actually not having to wait for as long as they have.

Secondly, I would also like to point out that we have done what I think has been a masterful job in Florida in using even the amount of small resources that we have gotten, in the fact that we are not building huge VA hospitals anymore. What we are doing is we are doing outpatient clinics. We are actually going into these communities. We are actually having these veterans be served right in their own back yards, not 100 miles away, not 200 miles away, which in some cases is the way they did it. It was very cumbersome and very difficult.

With these additional dollars and, quite frankly, we could still use some more if we wanted to get into this, that we, in fact, believe that we have done a very good job with the smaller number of resources that we do have.

This whole VERA was really done on the fact because there were scarce resources, and the fact that over the years that every facility was getting just the same amount every day, or every year through the budget, they would get a 2 percent increase, a 3 percent increase, and there was nothing, nothing, to talk about the population changes that were happening in this country.

In fact, what we have noticed and what has been increasingly in Florida is the veterans population. So VERA basically just did a very simple allocation and said, if we can imagine this, that we ought to take health care for our veterans and follow where the patients are. That is all we are doing, is following where the patients have come.

So hopefully we are getting this point across to our constituencies here in Washington, and let my colleagues know that those veterans who have come from their States and have moved into our State are now finally being taken care of.

We appreciate what the Congress has done in the past. Please let us not turn this clock back. Please let us not have the situation where we have to go to those veterans that we all cherish and know what they gave up for us to go

back and tell them that the system is not going to work again, that we are going to rearrange these numbers again and not based on the right reasons but all on the wrong reasons.

So with that, I would hope that we defeat this amendment.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that in the interest of time, to ensure that every speaker has the opportunity for a full 5 minutes of debate on their part and at the same time being concerned about the amount of time this amendment is taking, if we could not agree on a time certain to end debate.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent, just looking around, I would think the Members I see on the floor who I think are interested in this debate that we would end all debate by 10 minutes until 4:00, or some such time that we might agree on.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from West Virginia?

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, reserving the right to object, maybe that is the best way to do it. If we could make that 4:00, I think there are about six of us here at this point in time, that would work about right. That would be 30 minutes, if that is agreeable.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I think that would give everybody on the floor an opportunity to speak. If there would be no objection to that, I would agree to 4:00.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from West Virginia that debate on the Hinchey amendment conclude at 4:00?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will continue to recognize Members under the 5-minute rule.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to be here today to speak out on this important subject. There has been an ongoing lack of agreement between certain regions of the country on veterans and equitable funding. This particular problem has been cleared up by Congress. We all know what the problems were before the McCain and Graham bill that came up with this equitable formula, and I say it is equitable because the model is composed or computed in such a way that the VA's funding methodology is no longer based on traditional patterns. It is based on an assessment of what is done there. It is based on certain facets, and it is tailored to the price index that reflects the unique characteristics of these particular areas. So these veterans' networks, each of them has a separate and distinct characteristic and that is the background of the VERA funding model.

The implementation of VERA, as we all know, took place in 1997. Halfway through the fiscal year, everything was done to allocate resources in an equi-

table manner. The networks were funded at approximately one half of the 1996 level, plus a 2.75 percent increase. For fiscal year 1998, 13 VISNs received increases over funding levels for fiscal year 1997. Nine networks received less funding.

As with the previous year, a 5 percent limitation cap was imposed on the amount that any VISN, that any network, could be reduced below 1997 levels. So regardless of what we are hearing today, Mr. Chairman, not any of the VISNs have been hurt that tremendously so that we should not stick to our VERA formula.

I am calling for a defeat of this amendment because the medical care appropriated budget which comes to this subcommittee for 1999 provides a modest increase over fiscal year 1998 to \$220 million, or 1.3 percent. For the 1999 fiscal allocations, the maximum amount, maximum that any VISN network was reduced below 1998, was, again, just 5 percent. The VA has emphasized that these networks receiving relatively fewer fundings will adjust, and they will adjust because the money is going where the veterans are. Wherever the veterans go, according to the VERA formula, that is where the money goes.

The older veterans come to Florida; not only Florida. That is one of the States they go, but I am here to say that we have a good formula. We do not need to change it because of traditional patterns. It is not the fault of Florida that the older veterans and the sicker veterans come to Florida.

We are here today to say that the basic care of veterans is being taken care of adequately by the VERA formula. So is the complex care. So is the geographic price adjustment. There is a differential here that makes this adjustment fair to the Northeast as well as the South, and it is based on labor costs that is paid by the VA facilities, as they compare to the VA national average.

These figures are not just pulled out of the sky, Mr. Chairman. There is that differential that is based upon labor costs.

Also, they make allocation adjustments for labor that is based on the most recent data that the VA can put together. So in 1999, it even looks better for VERA in terms of adjusting the formula.

This VERA formula is fair. It is equitable. It is based on substantive data. It is not based on historical funding patterns as to who received the money 15 to 20 years ago. It is not based on politics. Congress initiated this formula, and I would like to say to my colleagues, please defeat the Hinchey amendment for fairness for all the veterans of this country.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in very strong support of the Hinchey-Frelinghuysen amendment. I am very proud to be one

of the cosponsors of it, which simply calls for a 1-year moratorium on the VA's implementation of the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation formula, and as Members know by now, hearing it so often, VERA. The moratorium will give Congress and the administration the time needed to make adjustments in the VERA formula that was instituted in 1997 so that veterans in certain geographical areas and age groups are no longer shortchanged by this funding mechanism. Quite simply, we simply need to put E, the big E, equity, back into VERA. Regrettably VERA paints veterans services with a broad brush leaving very little, if any, room for significant examination waiting costs associated with health care. VERA is a mathematical formula that essentially calculates how much a VA network will receive based on the raw number of veterans and whether their health care needs are basic or complex. The formula fails, utterly fails, to take into account the age and perhaps most importantly the specific type of illnesses faced by the various veterans populations.

For example, in New Jersey, our veterans are the second oldest group of veterans in the Nation, if we quantify it by State. As we all know, with age comes a plethora of health care problems, many of them more costly to treat. In our network alone 52 percent of veterans are over the age of 65 compared to 44 percent on the average, and I heard even earlier that many of these people, and they do, many of our veterans do move south and end up living in Florida. They happen to be the healthier ones, those who have the means as well as the health to go down to Florida, often by driving, and to have either a second home there or to actually up stakes and move there.

The sicker ones and the poorer people, the more indigent, stay in New Jersey and New York and they seek to use the services of the VA. They are the ones who cannot move. So it is not just age. It is also their costs, their situation. We have an explosion of things like cancer in our State. Those folks are not moving to Florida. They are seeking to get their health care right at their Veterans Administration, and now they are finding the VA has to do more with less.

Mr. Chairman, it is a 1-year moratorium we are asking for. This has only been in place since 1997. It is not working.

□ 1530

I happen to be the vice chairman of the Committee on Veterans Affairs. We have looked at this. I have sat with, for hours, with VA officials both in-State as well as down here, and I am totally dissatisfied with their answers, and I think I find it regrettable that some of my friends from Florida are standing up and saying it is okay down here. We are losing, and poor, indigent and very sickly veterans are the ones that are the net losers. We are not going to

stand by and allow it, and I hope that the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHAY) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN) amendment gets passed.

Mr. Chairman, it is a matter of equitable and fairness, and again we are asking for a 1-year moratorium so we can fix it.

Mr. Chairman, I urge support for the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, our amendment today calls for a one year moratorium on the VA's implementation of the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation Formula—VERA as it is known for short. The moratorium will give Congress and the Administration the time needed to make adjustments in the VERA formula that was instituted in 1997 so that veterans in certain geographical areas and age groups are no longer shortchanged by this funding mechanism. Quite simply, we need to put the "e"—equity—back into VERA.

Regrettably, VERA paints veterans services with a broad brush leaving very little—if any—room for significant extenuating costs associated with health care. VERA is a mathematical formula that essentially calculates how much a VA network will receive based on the raw number of veterans and whether their health care needs are basic or complex. The formula fails to take into account the age and perhaps most importantly, the specific types of illnesses faced by the various veterans populations. For instance, in New Jersey, our veterans are the second oldest group of veterans in the nation if you quantify by state. As we all know, with age comes new health care problems, many of them more costly. In the New Jersey part of our network alone, 58% of veterans are over the age of 65. Compare this with a nationwide average of 44%. However, the VERA formula makes no allowance for this disproportionate representation of aging veterans. A veteran's decision to stay in New Jersey or the Northeast for that matter, should not mean that their VA health care network is forced to do more with less. Veterans should not be forced to wait for weeks on end to see a primary care doctor or specialist as has been the case with increasing frequency in my state as a result of VERA.

Similarly, VERA fails to specifically weigh the type of medical treatment required in the varying networks.

For instance, the VA has mandated treatment of veterans with Hepatitis C. In New Jersey alone, the VA is treating 12 to 15 veterans per month who have tested positive for Hepatitis C, with a treatment cost of \$15,000 per patient. Failing to take into account that we have a high rate of Hepatitis C in our network as well as a high rate of AIDS cases, VERA punishes New Jersey and the larger network that we are in, for treating all veterans, not just those who use the VA for an annual physical or for prescription drugs, but those with serious, ongoing chronic illnesses.

Our veterans served our country in her time of need; we should not forget them now simply because where they chose to spend their "Golden Years" does not nicely mesh with the VA's own bureaucratic formula. While VERA is well intentioned, the fact of the matter is that it pits veterans against each other merely on the basis of their geography.

In the 4th Congressional district of New Jersey, which I have the privilege to represent,

veterans have felt the effects of VERA first hand. Faced with budget cuts due to the VERA formula, the network administrators who oversee Central and Northern New Jersey first responded with a knee jerk solution: elimination of the specialty services at the VA's clinic in Brick, New Jersey.

Needless to say, this decision immediately mobilized the veterans of Ocean and Monmouth Counties, who joined me in fighting these cuts. These specialty services, whether they be rheumatology or podiatry, free our veterans from being forced to spend valuable hours traveling great distances to see a specialist for the care they desperately need. Through my continued efforts to get the VA to "think outside the box," we have managed to restore specialty services to the Brick Clinic. This is a battle however that we should not have had to wage. Our veterans deserve their health care. It should be reasonably accessible, period. They should not be held hostage to VERA as they are now.

There is simply no question that the VERA formula brought on the Brick Clinic's ongoing financial challenges. Furthermore, we are faced with at least a \$36 million cut in our VA network in the upcoming fiscal year, so it is hard to see how threats to specialty services will not resume over the next several months. I ask my colleagues: where is the equity in a cut to Central and Northern New Jersey's network when our veteran population is aging rapidly and will need more, not less, specialty services?

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important amendment.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to voice my strong support for the Hinchey-Frelinghuysen amendment, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. The amendment is simple. It suspends the VERA program. What we need to do is to go back to the drawing board and come up with a program that is fair to all veterans.

If what the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) has just enunciated can be documented, this is an embarrassing situation, Mr. Chairman, for the veterans and those of us who think we are helping to provide for those veterans in the State. VERA has selective memory and selective facts when they determined where the dollars are going to help our veterans. How horrible that the veterans find themselves in what we are calling here and defining as a sectional war. It almost reminds me of the debate on transportation that was in this hall, these halls. I remember that distinctly. Many of our veterans are not even registered. Most veterans do not even know what their benefits are.

Mr. Chairman, that is indeed an embarrassing situation.

So while the age of vets is different in the State of New Jersey and while the type of illness is different in the State of New Jersey, in the tri-State area I might add, what we need to do is take a look at this program very, very carefully. Congress will provide \$1.7 billion more for veterans medical care,

yet for many veterans services they will be cut and medical providers will be reduced because many parts of the Northeast and Midwest will lose.

To those veterans who cannot move to Florida, I could not believe what I heard before to be very frank with my colleagues. With all due respect, the veterans equitable resource allocation program which re-directs money from one region of the country to another region of the country to pay for veterans who live in other parts of the country to me needs to be totally examined. God, if our veterans do not deserve better, who do?

The fact is that the VERA system is not equitable to all veterans. The amendment sends the message that VERA is not working, and it is not. The VA should develop a truly equitable plan.

Members of the military put themselves at great risk to protect American interests around the world. In return for this service the Federal Government made a commitment to both active duty and retired military personnel to provide certain benefits regardless of age, regardless of where they lived. Our veterans helped shape the prosperity our Nation currently enjoys. It is our duty to ensure that commitments made to those who serve are kept.

The VERA system is simply not working. I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment because it brings equity to all veterans and not just the select.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Let me just first rise in opposition to the well-intended amendment by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) and my colleagues from New Jersey and others who definitely are on the side of the veteran; we realize that. Let me also suggest to my colleagues that Florida is not the bastion of wealth that is being assumed in this amendment, that somehow only the poor remain in their respective home States and only the wealthy move to Florida. We have veterans of every economic level. I urge my colleagues to come to my district and see the veterans firsthand. They are moving though in record numbers to the Sunbelt; there is no question about it. Every census, we get additional Members of Congress; every census, we get a different ratio of distribution of the formulas because people are moving in record numbers. And there is no difference with veterans.

So I want to strongly urge we continue the formula currently established in law, that we look at ways to satisfy the concerns the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and others have raised, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), because they are genuine. They want to care for the people who served this country, and all of us together today should not be about debating States particularly, but how do we make certain that each and

every budget and fiscal appropriation first looks at the veterans who served this country, dedicated their lives and now have merely asked to be treated in a dignified manner that they deserve?

So again I want to urge my colleagues to carefully consider this, oppose the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY), and let us continue to debate the critical needs of veterans.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FOLEY. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, there has been a lot of discussion about the veterans population in Florida. As the gentleman well knows, that about 61 percent of those who are treated are service connected. It is a very, very high number. And, in fact, I think we are second maybe only to Maine in the entire country in regard to that. So there has been some misunderstanding here today.

Our funding under VERA has increased since 1997 by 14 percent in Florida, but the workload has increased by 30 percent. In fiscal year 1995, VISN-8, which is the area that serves Florida, the VA office treated 225,000 veterans in fiscal 1999, will treat about 295,000, and it will go up to 300,000 in fiscal year 2000. I think that it is very clear that we need VERA to work.

Now maybe some technical problems with it, but this amendment should be defeated. It is wrong, and I know how hard the chairman has worked on trying to increase the VA budget in this bill, and it is modestly there, not as far as the gentleman from Florida and I would like, but it is there to some extent. I am disappointed though that the NASA budget has been cut so severely, and it makes this bill extremely difficult for me to support because NASA is extremely important to Florida and the Nation as well. And I find it is not his fault, not the chairman's fault, not even the subcommittee's fault. But I find it very difficult that the way the appropriations language is set out in these committee structures, we cannot trade off with other areas where the gentleman and I would think we ought to have savings rather than taking it out of NASA which absolutely is critical for the future of this Nation.

I also believe that we have a very serious matter in all respects with everything under this legislation, but above all we must keep VERA the way it is. The Hinchey amendment, while well meaning, is absolutely destructive, trying to let the moneys flow where the veterans go, and they are flowing to our State. Mr. Chairman, we are the only State with an increasing veterans population, we are now the second largest in the Nation. And we are going to get even larger in the coming years, and if we do not have the formula that is currently in law, there is no way that the veterans populations that are moving to the State of Florida in increasing numbers can be possibly

served, are not even going to be served adequately as it is. We are well behind in every other respect.

So I very much appreciate the gentleman from Florida for having yielded, Mr. Chairman, and I strongly oppose this amendment.

Mr. FOLEY. Reclaiming my time, I want to reiterate we have had a substantial caseload increase in the veterans facility in my district, but I also wanted to single out the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) who has also been a strong strident advocate for veterans in her district, and while we disagree on the policy here, I do respect her standing up for veterans.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of this amendment and want to commend the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) for what they have done here today in presenting this opportunity. And I have got to tell my colleagues this is not about discriminating by adopting this amendment. We are not proposing to discriminate against anyone, we are doing quite the opposite. We are proposing that we create a formula, have a period of time here to create a formula that is fair to every veteran in every State of the Union. That is what this amendment is about.

Mr. Chairman, I am shocked and appalled that we are, under VERA, presently discriminating against those veterans who served their country nobly and discriminating against them based on which State they live in. We have got to end this travesty, and we have got to do it today with this amendment.

Now my colleagues have heard some of the numbers here, but speaking again for New York and New Jersey, but also for 22 other States that are dramatically cut. Do my colleagues hear that? It is not normally New York and New Jersey. There are 22 other States dramatically cut under this VERA formula. But in terms of New York and New Jersey, we have the biggest cut. We are reduced \$40 million.

Not only did we not gain a penny out of the \$1.7 billion, but we were cut \$40 million. Okay?

Now how does that get evaluated? How fair is that? How equitable can it possibly be? New Jersey has one of the oldest veterans populations, and if not the highest, one of the highest of the special needs veterans. I do not understand how anybody can support this kind of discrimination for our region of the country.

Now we have a lot of other things that we could say here, but let me in the interests of time draw another conclusion here.

The bottom line is that VERA is unacceptable, we must use this time period to correct it, and this amendment permits that correction. And might I say, and I do not know that anyone has

referenced this, but I will include this in my statement in the RECORD as an insert here, that even the GAO congressionally mandated study of August 1998 indicated in at least three areas, if not more, that there were oversights in funding to Northeast veterans, and they have indicated areas where VERA did not allocate resources necessarily properly, and I want that to be included here.

So let me say as firmly as possible we cannot discriminate against these wonderful men and women who have served their country. We have got to correct that inequity and correct that discrimination, and we can do it here today with the Frelinghuysen-Hinchey amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of this bipartisan amendment. This amendment will stop implementation of VERA, the VA's allocation formula, and sent it back to the drawing board so the VA can create a funding formula that is fair to every veteran in every state.

#### VERA IS UNFAIR

VERA unfairly pits veteran against veteran for the desperately needed health care services depending on which state they live in. I am appalled that we are discriminating against vets who served their country. Under VERA, seven different Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) encompassing 22 states, including New Jersey and New York, lost money because of VERA in FY 1999.

Let me give you an example of how unfair VERA truly is. In this year's bill, we will increase spending on veterans' health care by \$1.7 billion. This is a goal that many of my colleagues and I have worked on for years. Our veterans desperately need the added funding.

But let's examine what happens when the \$1.7 billion is distributed according to VERA. Veterans from New Jersey and New York will not see a single penny of the \$1.7 billion. In fact they will have their funding reduced by \$40 million!

How is this fair? How is this equitable? New Jersey has one of the oldest veterans' populations and the highest number of special needs veterans. The funding reduction caused by VERA is taking a tragic toll on the veterans of New Jersey and the Northeast.

#### HEALTH SERVICES IN NEW JERSEY ARE BEING REDUCED

To save money, the VA has cut back on numerous services for veterans and instituted various managed care procedures that have the impact of destroying the quality of care the veterans receive. For instance, the VA has reduced the amount of treatment offered to those who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and reduced the number of medical personnel at various health centers.

As a result of these cuts, there has been erosion of confidence between veterans and the VA. I can not describe the anger and pain I see in the faces of veterans in my district because of the reduction in health services. This erosion threatens to destroy the solemn commitment that this nation made to its veterans when they were called to duty.

We can not allow the VA to use VERA to save money by destroying the health care of veterans in New Jersey. We can not allow the VA to use VERA to use managed care to reduce quality. And we can not allow the VA to

use VERA to close veterans' hospitals just because they are within sixty miles of each other.

#### CONCLUSION

The bottom line is: VERA is unacceptable and must change to a fairer more equitable system. This amendment permits this correction.

Although the GAO study to study VERA found that overall access to veterans' health care has improved they did find some glaring conclusions that need to be examined. The study cites:

Although VA has made progress in improving the equity of resource allocations nationwide among the networks, it has done little to ensure that the networks fulfill the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) system's promise as they allocate resources to their facilities;

Although GAO prepared an overall assessment of access to care, difficulties in working with the data cast doubt on whether VA can perform timely and effective oversight;

Without such information, it is difficult for them to say conclusively whether VA has improved veterans' equity of access to care and whether veterans have not been adversely affected by the many changes under way to reduce costs and improve productivity;

Because of these oversights funding to northeast veterans is being cut.

Let me state as firmly as possible: There can be no compromise when it comes to veterans' health care. The promise made to veterans must be kept. We must do everything in our power to ensure that veterans receive the best health care possible.

Defending the Constitution of the United States on foreign soil is the greatest duty the nation can ask of its citizens. Our veterans answered the call to duty and performed it to the highest standard. We must keep our promise to our veterans regardless if they live in Florida, Texas, Maine or New Jersey. I believe a veteran is a veteran, period. The VA must have the same view. I strongly urge you to support this important amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I insert the following:

Without the \$1.7 billion increase, the following VISNs would lose money in FY00:

22 States lose significantly:

VISN 1 (New England)—\$28 million;

VISN 3 (New Jersey/New York)—\$40 million;

VISN 7 (Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina)—\$18 million;

VISN 11 (Michigan, Illinois, Indiana)—\$17 million;

VISN 12 (Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin)—\$16 million;

VISN 13 (Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota)—\$21 million;

VISN 14 (Nebraska, Iowa)—\$13 million;

VISN 15 (Missouri, Illinois, Kansas)—\$21 million;

VISN 22 (California, Nevada)—\$33 million.

Source: VA.

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment today, and I want to thank my colleagues for the work they have done on this. I also wanted to begin by thanking the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the subcommittee, for the tremendous job under difficult circumstances that he has done with the overall bill.

I am a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Mr. Chairman, and a Member who has a VA Medical Center in his district in Buffalo, New York, and also a Member who has together with other northeastern Members here sat down and talked with the Secretary of the VA some 2 or 3 months ago. The simple fact is that veterans are suffering, and while the VERA proposal was put together to provide more equitable funding for our veterans and their health care around the country, the opposite has occurred. It clearly has not done what it set out to do.

Mr. Chairman, I think all of us in this chamber are more pro veteran than anybody else, and this should not become a question of regionalism, it should not become a question of geographics; it should be a fairness question, and my colleagues, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) and others who offered the amendment are talking about fairness. It is a fairness question. We are not trying to pit geographic regions against each other.

This strikes at the heart of fairness, and I rise in support of it. I believe we need to take care of all of our country's veterans, and this is the way to do it, and we will support the amendment, and I ask my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the amendment.

As a member of the Veterans, Affairs Committee and as a member who has a VA medical center in his district I have seen first hand the effects that this VERA model has had on veterans in the Northeast.

Mr. Chairman, the simple fact is, our veterans are suffering.

Due to this VERA plan VA hospitals are unable to provide quality healthcare to our veterans because the funds are not there for them to provide the care.

I have witnessed first hand the effects of this VERA plan.

Veterans in my district have expressed to me how they are denied appointments and have to wait in long lines before a doctor at the VA will see them.

These VA medical centers are understaffed and underfunded, again, a direct result of the VERA system.

VERA was established to provide more equitable funding for veterans healthcare around the country.

It clearly has not done that.

Mr. Chairman, our veterans in the Northeast need help—the VERA system as it exists today is unfair.

I am not against veterans in the sunbelt or the Southwest.

I am pro-veteran, I would hope that my colleagues who are from those areas just mentioned would see the need for a fairer VERA system.

We need to take care of all of our country's veterans.

They deserve it.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, this member rises today in strong support of the Hinchey/Frelinghuysen amendment which would

prohibit funds in the bill from being used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to implement or administer the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) system.

From the time the Administration announced this new system, this Member has voiced his strong opposition to VERA and has supported funding levels of the VA Health Administration above the amount the President recommended. The new VERA system has had a very negative impact on Nebraska and other sparsely populated areas of the country. The VERA plan provides the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical care funding to regions across the country and employs an allocation formula that ties funding for each of the 22 geographic regions to the numbers of veterans they actually serve. While the VERA formula produced a very modest one percent increase in funding for this fiscal year, last year the VERA formula produced a 5 percent decrease, which resulted in \$13.5 million less funding distributed to VA programs in my state of Nebraska, resulting in the fact that Nebraska is still receiving significantly less veterans funding than it did only two years ago.

All members of Congress should agree, Mr. Chairman, that the VA must provide adequate facilities for veterans all across the country regardless of whether they live in sparsely populated areas with resultant low usage numbers for VA hospitals. The funding distribution unfairly reallocates the VA's health care budget based on a per capita veterans usage of facilities. Because of this formula, we have already been faced with the closure of a major VA medical facility in my district. While it is true that the number of veterans now eligible to be served at the Lincoln VA Hospital and other VA facilities in the state have decreased over the past years, we still have an obligation to provide care to these people who served our country during our greatest times of need. There must be at least a basic level of acceptable national infrastructure of facilities, medical personnel, and services for meeting the very real medical needs faced by our veterans wherever they live. The decrease in quality and accessibility of medical care for veterans who live in sparsely populated areas is completely unacceptable. There must be a threshold funding level for VA medical services in each state and region before any per-capita funding formula is applied.

In closing Mr. Chairman, this Member urges his colleagues to support the Hinchey/Frelinghuysen amendment.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to state my opposition to the Hinchey amendment because of the impact it would have on veterans across the country and in my home state of Florida. The Hinchey amendment would prohibit the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) that was implemented in 1997 from taking effect in fiscal year 2000.

The intent of VERA was to guarantee that veterans who have similar economic status and eligibility receive the same medical services regardless of where they live. Prior to VERA, veterans health care was based on historic use patterns even though growing numbers of veterans are leaving the Northeast and moving to warmer parts of the country. This movement has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of veterans moving to Florida and seeking medical care there. This rising volume of patients was overwhelming

veterans medical facilities in the district I represent and without VERA hundreds of veterans who sought care in my district would have been turned away without receiving it.

Many of my colleagues oppose VERA because they believe it does not provide a fair distribution of veterans medical care. However, the General Accounting Office (GAO) has already studied this issue extensively. In a study released in 1998 the GAO determined, "VERA has improved the equity of resource allocation to networks because, compared with the system it replaced, it provides more comparable levels of resources to each network for each high-priority veteran served."

Unfortunately, many of my colleagues are attacking a byproduct of the problem facing our veterans instead of focusing on the problem itself. The heart of the problem facing our nation's veterans is not VERA, it is the lack of funding provided by the Republican budget. VERA is a fair and equitable way to distribute funding for veterans medical care but there simply is not enough money to meet the growing need.

Over the next ten years the Republican budget declines sharply from the fiscal year 2000 level while veterans health care costs will increase over 20 percent. These two facts are irreconcilable and if the veteran's budget is not adjusted fights like this will only intensify unless we all realize the Republican budget is simply inadequate. In closing, I urge my colleagues to reject the Hinchey amendment and address the real problem facing our nation's veterans, the inadequate funding allocation provided by the Republican budget.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the amendment offered by Representative HINCHEY and my colleague from New Jersey, Representative FRELINGHUYSEN.

The so-called Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) is anything but equitable. In fact, it is having a devastating effect on our New Jersey veterans. The men and women who loyally answered the call to military service in our nation now feel forgotten. The dramatic reduction in funding as a result of the VERA program has resulted in eliminated services, reduced personnel and long waits for medical attention.

Many of our states' veterans are older; in fact, New Jersey's 750,000 veterans are the second oldest in the nation. Medical needs are much greater for the aging veterans population. Many require nursing home care or special attention for age-related conditions.

Mr. Chairman, the veterans of my state of New Jersey supported our nation when we needed them. Let's not turn our backs on them at a time in their lives when they need our support. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Hinchey-Frelinghuysen amendment.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Frelinghuysen/Hinchey amendment to prohibit the VA from expending funds to implement the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) formula for distribution of health care funds in fiscal year 2000.

Last year, during debate on the VA-HUD appropriations bill, I spoke on the negative impact of VERA on the VA's ability to meet the needs of veterans in the Northeast. Since then, the situation has gotten worse, not better for the 150,000 veterans in Maine. Veterans in my state depend on the Togus VA hospital in Augusta for their health care. Togus is located

in VISN 1. Last year, the VISN 1 budget shrunk by more than three percent. Despite this bill's \$1.7 billion increase in the fiscal year 2000 VA health care budget, VISN 1 would only receive a \$9 million increase. Such an increase would still be \$15 million less than fiscal year 1998 funding. Moreover, Togus had a \$5.5 million shortfall in fiscal year 1999.

These cuts have forced Togus to reduce staff, causing severe strains on quality and timeliness of care. A reduced budget means longer wait times and more veterans who must travel further for care out of the region.

Mr. Chairman, we have severely disabled veterans who must drive hours to Togus. They are forced to wait long periods of time for care because doctors' appointments are backlogged. Veterans are suffering and the staff is upset because they cannot provide the quality of care they have in the past.

The VERA formula needs to be reexamined. The cost of rural health care delivery is higher than in more populated and urban areas, and yet that is not considered in the current funding formula.

Mr. Chairman, this Congress' fixation on the huge tax cut for the wealthy is endangering funding for veterans programs, for housing and for other domestic programs. We must get our priorities straight, and keep the promise to the veterans in this country. Support the Frelinghuysen/Hinchey amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) will be postponed.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, the debate that has been going on for the last 2 days on VA HUD appropriations bill has been an interesting and engaging one, and I could not allow this debate to be ended without making some observations about what has taken place here.

Mr. Chairman, at a time when the economy is doing well and many people are benefiting from the well-performing economy, there is still many people who are left behind, and they need and deserve the support of their government. Too many farmers and seniors wait for years to receive HUD rental assistance because they have nowhere else to turn.

In the city of Los Angeles, over 160,000 persons are on the waiting lists for section 8 housing. The elderly, veterans, persons with disabilities, and the working poor make up the group on the section 8 waiting list. Unless we provide additional resources to fund section 8 and elderly housing, this number will continue to grow.

Two disturbing practices are becoming common place among those without affordable housing. One is referred to as must-share units. In a must-share unit several families share one housing

unit. It is not uncommon to walk into one of these units and see three families living in a three bedroom home each with a padlock on the door to their bedroom and sharing kitchen and bathroom facilities.

Second are illegal garage conversions. Here people run a water line and possibly some electricity into a garage and moves in a family. Tens of thousands of these make-shift homes are cropping up all over California. It should be noted that persons living in must-share units, as well as illegal garage conversions are the working poor, people who go to work every day and are doing things that the government asks of American citizens.

This bill negatively affects the most vulnerable American citizens. Of the 12.5 million very low-income rented households living in severely substandard housing are paying more than one half of their income for rent 1.5 million are elderly, and 4.5 million are children. The number of adults with disabilities living in such circumstances is between 1.1 and 1.4 million.

In the face of record need for affordable housing for our seniors, children, veterans and the working poor, Congress is set to worsen an already difficult predicament. This VA-HUD bill cuts \$515 million in public housing programs alone, 250 million from the community development block grants, 10 million from the housing opportunities for people with AIDS program, 3.5 million from grants to historically black colleges and universities, and 1.9 million from the economic development initiatives.

□ 1545

As a result of these cuts, my home State of California will receive \$151 million less than the amount requested by HUD. Specifically, the 35th District of California that I represent will receive \$4.6 million less than the amount requested by HUD.

There is no fat to trim from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's budget. Every penny is needed.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask for a "no" vote on this appropriations bill. I ask for a "no" vote because it is absolutely shameful and unconscionable that we would be putting at risk the most vulnerable of our society, at a time when this economy is functioning so well.

We have a need for housing out there and help for people who simply will be on the streets without our assistance. It is unconscionable that we would have the waiting list for Section 8 that we have.

I want to tell you, even though it may be California, that space, with people living in garages, some without running water, it is your area next. We have growth in this population. Of course, we are in the Sun Belt and we may have more growth than some other areas, but you will witness it too. If you but go around your districts,

even those districts that are high-income districts, you have low-income areas in your districts. Many of you have poor areas that you do not even recognize in your districts. Even if you do not see it in your districts, you are still stepping over the homeless on some of the major thoroughfares in America.

I ask for a "no" vote on this bill. It is the wrong thing for us to do.

#### SEQUENTIAL VOTES POSTPONED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, proceedings will now resume on those amendments on which further proceedings were postponed in the following order:

The amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) and the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

#### AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF MICHIGAN

The CHAIRMAN. The pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The Clerk designated the amendment.

#### RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 69, noes 354, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 399]

#### AYES—69

Armey	Hayworth	Peterson (MN)
Barcia	Hefley	Peterson (PA)
Barr	Herger	Pickering
Bartlett	Hilleary	Pitts
Bonilla	Holden	Pombo
Brady (TX)	Hostettler	Radanovich
Burton	Hoyer	Rohrabacher
Coble	Hunter	Ryun (KS)
Crane	Jenkins	Sabo
Danner	Johnson, Sam	Salmon
DeMint	Kingston	Schaffer
Dingell	Larson	Sensenbrenner
Duncan	Latham	Sessions
Emerson	Lucas (OK)	Shadegg
English	Martinez	Sherwood
Everett	McCarthy (NY)	Shimkus
Fowler	McIntosh	Smith (MI)
Gekas	Mica	Sweeney
Gibbons	Ney	Tancredo
Goode	Nussle	Thornberry
Goodlatte	Oberstar	Tiahrt
Goodling	Pascrell	Walden
Hayes	Paul	Weldon (PA)

#### NOES—354

Abercrombie	Barrett (NE)	Bilirakis
Ackerman	Barrett (WI)	Bishop
Aderholt	Barton	Blagojevich
Allen	Bass	Bliley
Andrews	Bateman	Blumenauer
Archer	Becerra	Blunt
Bachus	Bentsen	Boehert
Baird	Bereuter	Boehner
Baker	Berkley	Bonior
Baldacci	Berman	Bono
Baldwin	Biggert	Borski
Ballenger	Bilbray	Boswell
		Boucher
		Boyd
		Brady (PA)
		Brown (FL)
		Brown (OH)
		Bryant
		Burr
		Buyer
		Callahan
		Calvert
		Camp
		Campbell
		Canady
		Cannon
		Capps
		Capuano
		Cardin
		Carson
		Castle
		Chabot
		Chambliss
		Chenoweth
		Clay
		Clayton
		Clement
		Clyburn
		Coburn
		Collins
		Combest
		Condit
		Conyers
		Cook
		Costello
		Cox
		Coyne
		Cramer
		Cubin
		Cummings
		Cunningham
		Davis (FL)
		Davis (IL)
		Davis (VA)
		Deal
		DeFazio
		DeGette
		Delahunt
		DeLauro
		DeLay
		Deutsch
		Diaz-Balart
		Dickey
		Dicks
		Dixon
		Doggett
		Dooley
		Doolittle
		Doyle
		Dreier
		Dunn
		Edwards
		Ehlers
		Ehrlich
		Engel
		Eshoo
		Etheridge
		Evans
		Ewing
		Farr
		Fattah
		Filner
		Fletcher
		Foley
		Forbes
		Ford
		Fossella
		Frank (MA)
		Franks (NJ)
		Frelinghuysen
		Frost
		Gallely
		Ganske
		Gejdenson
		Gephardt
		Gilchrest
		Gillmor
		Gilman
		Gonzalez
		Gordon
		Goss
		Graham
		Granger
		Green (TX)
		Green (WI)
		Greenwood
		Gutierrez
		Gutknecht
		Hall (OH)
		Hall (TX)
		Hansen
		Hastings (FL)
		Hastings (WA)
		Hill (IN)
		Hill (MT)
		Hilliard
		Hinchey
		Hinojosa
		Hobson
		Hoeffel
		Hoekstra
		Holt
		Hoolley
		Horn
		Houghton
		Hulshof
		Hyde
		Inslie
		Isakson
		Istook
		Jackson (IL)
		Jackson-Lee
		(TX)
		Jefferson
		John
		Johnson (CT)
		Johnson, E. B.
		Jones (NC)
		Jones (OH)
		Kanjorski
		Kaptur
		Kasich
		Kelly
		Kennedy
		Kildee
		Kilpatrick
		Kind (WI)
		King (NY)
		Klecza
		Klink
		Knollenberg
		Kolbe
		Kucinich
		Kuykendall
		LaFalce
		LaHood
		Lampson
		Lantos
		Largent
		LaTourette
		Lazio
		Leach
		Lee
		Levin
		Lewis (CA)
		Lewis (GA)
		Lewis (KY)
		Linder
		Lipinski
		LoBiondo
		Lofgren
		Lowe
		Lucas (KY)
		Luther
		Maloney (CT)
		Maloney (NY)
		Manzullo
		Markey
		Mascara
		Matsui
		McCarthy (MO)
		McCollum
		McCrery
		McDermott
		McGovern
		McHugh
		McInnis
		McIntyre
		McKeon
		McKinney
		McNulty
		Meehan
		Meek (FL)
		Meeks (NY)
		Menendez
		Metcalfe
		Millender
		McDonald
		Miller (FL)
		Miller, Gary
		Miller, George
		Minge
		Mink
		Moakley
		Mollohan
		Moore
		Moran (KS)
		Moran (VA)
		Morella
		Murtha
		Myrick
		Nadler
		Napolitano
		Neal
		Nethercutt
		Northup
		Norwood
		Obey
		Oliver
		Ortiz
		Ose
		Owens
		Oxley
		Packard
		Pallone
		Pastor
		Payne
		Pease
		Pelosi
		Petri
		Phelps
		Pickett
		Pomeroy
		Porter
		Portman
		Price (NC)
		Quinn
		Rahall
		Ramstad
		Regula
		Reyes
		Reynolds
		Riley
		Rivers
		Rodriguez
		Roemer
		Rogers
		Ros-Lehtinen
		Rothman
		Roukema
		Roybal-Allard
		Royce
		Rush
		Ryan (WI)
		Sanchez
		Sanders
		Sandlin
		Sanford
		Sawyer
		Saxton
		Scarborough
		Schakowsky
		Scott
		Serrano
		Shaw
		Shays
		Sherman
		Shows
		Shuster
		Simpson
		Sisisky
		Skeen
		Skelton
		Slaughter
		Smith (NJ)
		Smith (TX)
		Smith (WA)
		Snyder
		Souder
		Spence
		Spratt
		Stabenow
		Stark
		Stearns
		Stenholm
		Strickland
		Stump
		Stupak
		Talent
		Tanner
		Tauscher
		Tauzin
		Taylor (MS)
		Taylor (NC)
		Terry
		Thomas
		Thompson (CA)
		Thompson (MS)
		Thune
		Thurman
		Tierney
		Toomey
		Trafficant
		Turner
		Udall (CO)
		Udall (NM)
		Upton
		Velazquez
		Vento



Visclosky	Waxman	Wilson
Vitter	Weiner	Wise
Walsh	Weldon (FL)	Wolf
Wamp	Weller	Woolsey
Waters	Wexler	Wu
Watkins	Weygand	Wynn
Watt (NC)	Whitfield	Young (FL)
Watts (OK)	Wicker	

## NOT VOTING—10

Berry	Pryce (OH)	Towns
Cooksey	Rangel	Young (AK)
Crowley	Rogan	
Hutchinson	Sununu	

□ 1609

Mr. MCHUGH, Ms. BERKLEY, and Mr. SCARBOROUGH changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

Messrs. COBLE, ROHRABACHER, ARMEY, BURTON of Indiana, SHERWOOD, and HOYER changed their vote from "no" to "aye."

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, the Chair announces that he will reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the period of time within which a vote by electronic device will be taken on the amendment on which the Chair has postponed further proceedings.

## AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. HINCHEY

The Chairman. The pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The Clerk designated the amendment.

## RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIRMAN. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 158, noes 266, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 400]

AYES—158

Ackerman	Delahunt	Holt
Allen	DeLauro	Houghton
Andrews	Doyle	Hulshof
Bachus	Ehlers	Jackson (IL)
Baldacci	Engel	Johnson (CT)
Barcia	English	Jones (OH)
Barrett (NE)	Evans	Kanjorski
Barton	Ewing	Kelly
Bass	Fattah	Kennedy
Bereuter	Forbes	Killde
Berman	Fossella	Kilpatrick
Biggart	Frank (MA)	Kind (WI)
Blagojevich	Franks (NJ)	King (NY)
Boehler	Frelinghuysen	Klecza
Bonior	Ganske	Klink
Borski	Gejdenson	Kucinich
Boswell	Gekas	LaFalce
Brady (PA)	Gilman	LaHood
Camp	Goodling	Larson
Capuano	Graham	Latham
Castle	Green (WI)	LaTourette
Chabot	Greenwood	Lazio
Conyers	Gutierrez	Leach
Costello	Hinchey	Levin
Coyne	Hoeffel	Lipinski
Crane	Hoekstra	LoBiondo
Davis (IL)	Holden	Lowey

Luther	Pallone	Sherwood
Maloney (CT)	Pascrell	Shimkus
Maloney (NY)	Payne	Shuster
Manzullo	Peterson (PA)	Skelton
Markey	Petri	Slaughter
Martinez	Phelps	Smith (MI)
Mascara	Pitts	Smith (NJ)
Matsui	Pombo	Spence
McCarthy (NY)	Porter	Stabenow
McGovern	Quinn	Stupak
McHugh	Ramstad	Sweeney
McNulty	Reynolds	Terry
Meehan	Riley	Tierney
Meeks (NY)	Rivers	Toomey
Menendez	Roemer	Trafigant
Moakley	Rothman	Upton
Mollohan	Roukema	Velazquez
Murtha	Rush	Visclosky
Nadler	Ryan (WI)	Walsh
Neal	Sanders	Waters
Ney	Sawyer	Waxman
Nussle	Saxton	Weiner
Oberstar	Schakowsky	Weldon (PA)
Obey	Sensenbrenner	Weller
Olver	Serrano	Weygand
Owens	Shays	

## NOES—266

Abercrombie	Dixon	Kuykendall
Aderholt	Doggett	Lampson
Archer	Dooley	Lantos
Army	Doolittle	Largent
Baird	Dreier	Lee
Baker	Duncan	Lewis (CA)
Baldwin	Dunn	Lewis (GA)
Ballenger	Edwards	Lewis (KY)
Barr	Ehrlich	Linder
Barrett (WI)	Emerson	Lofgren
Bartlett	Eshoo	Lucas (KY)
Bateman	Etheridge	Lucas (OK)
Becerra	Everett	McCarthy (MO)
Bentsen	Farr	McCollum
Berkley	Filner	McCrery
Bilbray	Fletcher	McDermott
Bilirakis	Foley	McInnis
Bishop	Ford	McIntosh
Bliley	Fowler	McIntyre
Blumenauer	Frost	McKeon
Blunt	Gallegly	McKinney
Boehner	Gephardt	Meek (FL)
Bonilla	Gibbons	Metcalfe
Bono	Gilchrest	Mica
Boucher	Gillmor	Millender-
Boyd	Gonzalez	McDonald
Brady (TX)	Goode	Miller (FL)
Brown (FL)	Goodlatte	Miller, Gary
Brown (OH)	Gordon	Miller, George
Bryant	Goss	Minge
Burr	Granger	Mink
Burton	Green (TX)	Moore
Buyer	Gutknecht	Moran (KS)
Callahan	Hall (OH)	Moran (VA)
Calvert	Hall (TX)	Morella
Campbell	Hansen	Myrick
Canady	Hastings (FL)	Napolitano
Cannon	Hastings (WA)	Nethercutt
Capps	Hayes	Northup
Cardin	Hayworth	Norwood
Carson	Hefley	Ortiz
Chambliss	Herger	Ose
Chenoweth	Hill (IN)	Oxley
Clay	Hill (MT)	Packard
Clayton	Hilleary	Pastor
Clement	Hilliard	Paul
Clyburn	Hinojosa	Pease
Coble	Hobson	Pelosi
Coburn	Hooley	Peterson (MN)
Collins	Horn	Pickering
Combest	Hostettler	Pickett
Condit	Hoyer	Pomeroy
Cook	Hunter	Portman
Cox	Hutchinson	Price (NC)
Cramer	Hyde	Radanovich
Cubin	Inslee	Rahall
Cummings	Isakson	Regula
Cunningham	Istook	Reyes
Danner	Jackson-Lee	Rodriguez
Davis (FL)	(TX)	Rogers
Davis (VA)	Jefferson	Rohrabacher
Deal	Jenkins	Ros-Lehtinen
DeFazio	John	Roybal-Allard
DeGette	Johnson, E. B.	Royce
DeLay	Johnson, Sam	Ryun (KS)
DeMint	Jones (NC)	Sabo
Deutch	Kaptur	Salmon
Diaz-Balart	Kasich	Sanchez
Dickey	Kingston	Sandlin
Dicks	Knollenberg	Sanford
Dingell	Kolbe	Scarborough

Schaffer	Stump	Vitter
Scott	Talent	Walden
Sessions	Tancred	Wamp
Shadegg	Tanner	Watkins
Shaw	Tauscher	Watt (NC)
Sherman	Tauzin	Watts (OK)
Shows	Taylor (MS)	Weldon (FL)
Simpson	Taylor (NC)	Wexler
Sisisky	Thomas	Whitfield
Skeen	Thompson (CA)	Wicker
Smith (TX)	Thompson (MS)	Wilson
Smith (WA)	Thornberry	Wise
Snyder	Thune	Wolf
Souder	Thurman	Woolsey
Spratt	Tiahrt	Wu
Stark	Turner	Wynn
Stearns	Udall (CO)	Young (FL)
Stenholm	Udall (NM)	
Strickland	Vento	

## NOT VOTING—9

Berry	Pryce (OH)	Sununu
Cooksey	Rangel	Towns
Crowley	Rogan	Young (AK)

□ 1620

Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DOOLITTLE, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

Mr. VISCLOSKEY and Mr. NEY changed their vote from "no" to "aye."

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Chairman, due to circumstances beyond my control, I was unable to be present for rollcall votes 390 through 400.

If I had been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall No. 390, "yes" on rollcall no. 391, "no" on rollcall No. 392, "yes" on rollcall No. 393, "yes" on rollcall No. 394, "yes" on rollcall No. 395, "no" on rollcall No. 396, "yes" on rollcall No. 397, "yes" on rollcall No. 398, "yes" on rollcall No. 399, and "no" on rollcall No. 400.

## AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GREEN OF WISCONSIN

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. . None of the funds appropriated by this Act may be used to terminate inpatient services at the Iron Mountain Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Iron Mountain, Michigan or to close that facility.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I intend to withdraw this amendment after entering into a brief colloquy with the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the subcommittee, regarding the Iron Mountain VA Medical Center in Iron Mountain, Michigan.

I have drafted this amendment because I am greatly concerned that the VA considered and is considering closing and reducing this facility and service to the point where veterans will not be able to receive the care they need or so richly deserve.

There are currently 72,000 veterans in northern Wisconsin and the upper peninsula of Michigan who are eligible for care at this facility. This facility provides important and unique services to the veterans throughout this region.

Earlier this year, the VA announced efforts to develop a, quote, conceptualized plan to reengineer health services in VISN 12. There has been talk that part of this reengineering strategy would involve the reduction in the number of acute care beds in Iron Mountain from 17 to 8, and taking those 8 remaining beds and using them merely for stabilization, where patients would be stabilized and then transferred via ambulance to Milwaukee.

As one might imagine, the veterans in this region are worried and with good reason. Currently, nearly 14,000 veterans are enrolled in the Iron Mountain facility. This represents a 20 percent increase over last year. In 1998, there were a total of 1,066 admissions, 1,066 admissions for only 17 beds. It is obvious that these beds are badly needed and overutilized.

Unfortunately, if veterans are not treated at Iron Mountain, they will be forced to make an ambulance ride of over 200 miles to receive acute care in Milwaukee. It has been estimated that 770 veterans a year would have to make that ambulance trip at a cost of nearly \$2,000 per ride to receive care. We are asking the sickest, those who are in the greatest need, to travel hundreds of miles to receive care, and that their family members make a similar trip.

Mr. Chairman, I ask the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) what can be done to ensure that VISN 12 will continue to maintain their inpatient services at the Iron Mountain VA Medical Center in the future?

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for his continued concern and efforts on behalf of the veterans in his district and the State of Wisconsin and bringing this important issue before the committee's attention.

In H.R. 2684, we provided a \$1.7 billion increase for veterans medical care, the largest increase in history. With this increase, the VA will be able to continue to provide services to his veterans and ours.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman and the committee for their hard work this year to ensure that the VA will continue to provide quality health care to the veterans in my district and all across America.

I also ask the chairman for his help in working against efforts in the future to reduce health services at the Iron Mountain facility.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman again for his comments, and we look forward to working with him on this important issue.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK).

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding to me.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH)

and others for their interest in the Iron Mountain VA Medical Center and thanks to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) for his efforts on this behalf here.

This facility is in my district. In Michigan, my congressional district has more veterans than anyone else. The Iron Mountain Medical Center is the second largest acute care facility in the patient service area covering an area of 25,000 square miles. So veterans from the upper peninsula, northern Wisconsin, and other geographic areas depend on a full range of services at the Iron Mountain VA Medical Center.

Now, earlier this year, as was pointed out, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), Senator FEINGOLD, Senator KOHL, myself, and others will have joined in because they are going to cut the last acute care beds in this area.

We have spoken with VA officials, and they have told us that the beds will not be cut. It is interesting to note that this bill does not call for any cuts in beds or services. Despite the last amendment, we in rural areas are concerned about proposed cuts. It seems like, as soon as the VA faces a crunch, they always look to the rural areas, and we are the ones to get hit first.

So a primary concern for veterans and their families, as has been pointed out, is the geographic remoteness of the area and the vast distances that are required to travel for care. For instance, if Iron Mountain was closed, the next closest VA facility is in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Some of my veterans would have to travel 500 miles one way just to get services from the VA. So not only is it an unnecessary hardship, but potential serious danger to their health as they are trying to move back and forth.

I am pleased to note, and the way I understand it, the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act, H.R. 2116, contains provisions which may actually be favorable to rural facilities such as Iron Mountain, because H.R. 2116 would require the Veterans Administration to maintain the current level of service while at the same time encouraging long-term reform.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) has expired.

(On request of Mr. STUPAK, and by unanimous consent, Mr. GREEN was allowed to proceed for 2 additional minutes.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman from Wisconsin will continue to yield, H.R. 2116 would encourage long-term reform, improve access through facility realignment, eligibility reform, and enhance revenues.

It is vitally important that the Iron Mountain VA Medical Center remain strong, and any reduction in service would be fairly detrimental to those who have served our country for so long.

Again, I appreciate the interest of the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), the gentleman from Wis-

consin (Mr. GREEN), and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and all the rest who worked together.

We look forward to continue to work with him to ensure our Nation's veterans receive the health care they earn and deserve and to ensure there is no reduction in services at the Iron Mountain VA center.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I would just thank the Chair and thank the chairman of the subcommittee once again for his hard work, not just his pledge of support to work with me with respect to the VA medical facility, but on this bill, the largest increase in history for veterans health care.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, reserving the right to object, I would simply like to reiterate to the gentleman what the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) has indicated; that when we first discovered the possibility of the reduction of the beds for that facility that Senator KOHL and Senator FEINGOLD and Senator LEVIN, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) and I sent a letter to the VA noting the illogical nature of closing the remote hospital beds while we had such an overlap in some of our largest urban areas.

I talked personally with the leadership of the VA; and after that conversation, they made it quite clear to me that they had no intention of closing any of those beds in that facility. Certainly this budget has no provision for closing those beds.

I appreciate very much the willingness of the VA to reconsider what, to me, was an ill-advised approach. I do think Members of Congress have to be careful because it is very difficult for us to be logically consistent if we are voting for budgets which appear to demand overall reductions and then if we object when specific reductions are then made in either our own areas or in our own favorite programs.

□ 1630

But in this instance I am very happy that we received the response that we have from the VA.

Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, reserving the right to object, I want to pick up on the comments of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

I agree with the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) with regard to the case that the gentleman has made for Iron Mountain, and certainly the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) have made strong cases as members of the gentleman's delegation. But as the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) said, it is more than illogical. It could border on hypocrisy I could say, that the folks on this side of the aisle

get up and argue for their medical centers and their clinics to stay open, for their services to go unimpeded, and then, when the chance is offered, as it was yesterday on at least eight occasions, for Members to vote to allow the funding of the VA, which is vastly underfunded, when my colleague had the chance to vote on that, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) voted no.

So to come here and argue for a VA center in a particular district, to come up and argue for that, but to vote no on additional funding for the VA and then go back home and say how much you fought for your VA, borders a little bit, I will say on the illogical to keep the same frame of reference of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY), in earlier debate I think, said very eloquently if we move funds to do what different individuals want to do with their particular VA hospitals means that we will cut quality here, that we will cut services there, because we do not have enough money in the VA budget. We are underfunded in VA health care by at least \$1.5 billion in spite of the plus-up that the subcommittee gave.

So unless the gentleman is willing on his side of the aisle to join us in raising the budget to the \$3 billion that the veterans of this Nation came up with, then I think that the other side has some soul searching to do with these kinds of amendments.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FILNER. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I would ask him if he was aware that this bill increases veterans' medical care by \$1.7 billion?

Mr. FILNER. Reclaiming my time under my reservation, Mr. Chairman, I would respond to the chairman that I am very aware, and I would ask in return, is the gentleman aware that the independent budget of 300 veterans' organizations around this country said that the minimum, the absolute minimum, to keep our VA health system going and not to have closures like the gentleman wants to protest about in his district, like I would not want in my own district, that that budget asks for \$3.2 billion for veterans' health care? So the gentleman gave one-half of what was needed. And we are going to have these issues all through the next year based on the budget.

I agree with the chairman when he called the budget the President's budget plus 1.7. I think it might be called the Walsh budget minus 1.5. That is, it is higher than the President's; but it is lower than what it should be. And the gentleman's Members are going to come up every day in the coming session and say please do not close my hospital.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman continue to yield?

Mr. FILNER. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. In the event that we do provide this 1.7 increase in this bill, is the gentleman prepared to support that \$1.7 billion increase? Because if he does not he is then, in effect, supporting the President's level of level funding.

Mr. FILNER. No, I am supporting the independent budget of 3.2. I am going to vote against the bill on the floor because it is insufficient. And everybody in this House ought to vote against it so we do not have the problems that the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) raises, and that the gentleman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) is about to raise, and that we had raised earlier by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARR). We are going to have colloquies from 435 districts about closing VA facilities unless we pass a reasonable bill.

Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MRS. KELLY

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mrs. KELLY:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. —. None of the funds provided by this Act may be used to close any Department of Veterans Affairs medical center.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer a very simple amendment. This amendment would prohibit the VA from closing any VA hospitals during fiscal year 2000.

We are in the midst of a great deal of change in the way the VA provides medical care to our veterans. The health care being provided by VA medical centers is moving from an inpatient-based hospital system to more of an outpatient-based clinical system. The VA is reacting to the same forces that are changing our private health care. There is a great deal of uncertainty for our veterans. I am constantly hearing from veterans expressing their concerns over the potential closing of hospitals.

To these concerns of our veterans Secretary West has responded. In numerous speeches before veterans service organizations this year, and in meetings with the New York congressional delegation, Secretary West has made a pledge to keep all VA hospitals open throughout the year 2000. With this in mind, it is prudent to assist the Secretary in his efforts and put a temporary hold on the closing of any VA hospitals until October 2000.

In recent weeks, the GAO came out with a report citing their findings of underused, inefficient VA hospitals wasting our VA dollars. It seems to me that the wise course would be to allow the VA to review and examine the facilities in question before any long-term decisions are made. The VA has assets and it has needs. We must take advantage of those assets, namely the

existing infrastructure, and use them to help address the growing needs of our aging veteran population's needs.

The GAO has noted that these hospitals are antiquated and do not measure up to current standards. That is no fault of the hospitals; it is the result of a lack in proper funding for infrastructure and improvements. Congress has already passed initiatives that can assist the VA in realizing the potential of these underused facilities through the Enhanced Use Lease Authority. While this authority is in need of improvement, it is the right idea and we must ensure that any closure of hospitals maximizes the use of this authority.

One way this could be used is to lease the space to provide, for example, much-needed long-term geriatric care to our veterans. They represent the fastest growing need for our veteran population. Over the next 21 years, the veteran population over 85 years of age is expected to increase 333 percent. This demonstrates an imperative situation. Let us not close down one of the greatest assets of the VA system, namely, its infrastructure. Let us make it work for our veterans.

I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to carefully consider these issues and support this amendment.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, the arguments the gentlewoman just made were extremely good. I support the gentlewoman's amendment. And I need to be nice to her, since she represents my daughter up in Bedford, New York. So I thank her for her representation. But, once again, I cannot fail to point out that the logic of the budget that the majority party is pushing and that the gentlewoman voted for and refused to amend is pushing toward exactly the situation that she wants to prevent.

I am with the gentlewoman. I think we should do exactly what the gentlewoman said. And she has laid out a rational, objective policy for the VA to follow. Unfortunately, we are putting them in the position, by underfunding them, that they are going to have to take positions that none of us will like when it comes to health care. And as the gentlewoman said earlier in regard to the debate on another matter, if they do not do this, they are going to cut quality or cut services. Something has got to give if they do not have enough money, and assuming they are using the money efficiently and assuming they are using the money to the best degree. And we all have to question that, and the gentlewoman's amendment asks for that.

But I will tell my colleague that, again, I find it highly illogical, bordering on hypocrisy, that the majority party puts forward these amendments to stop the closure of Iron Mountain, to put a clinic in the district of the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARR), to stop the closing of VA hospitals anywhere; and yet when they are given the opportunity to vote additional funds,

not to break the budget, not to be doing something irresponsible, but to put in what the veterans of this Nation have said is absolutely essential to keep the quality of our VA system going, they vote no. And then my colleagues are on TV and they are back home saying that they are fighting for their veterans. Yet on all the procedural motions, not to mention the substantive motions, that will allow the majority to really back up what they are saying with the money to cover it, they vote no.

So I am going to continue to point out this illogic. I am going to continue to point out that the dynamics of my colleague's own budget undercuts what she is trying to do. If the gentlewoman's amendment passes, which I hope it does, then, as she said earlier in her comments, they are going to give way somewhere else. So the gentlewoman's constituents are going to face a lack of quality of services or a lack of some specialist or other service. And until the majority party votes to increase this funding, we are going to have the positions that the gentlewoman is arguing for.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FILNER. I yield to the gentlewoman from New York.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I hear what my colleague is saying; however, I think it is very important that we focus on a couple of things that I think are of importance.

One is that the President's budget asked for only \$200 million, whereas this bill puts in \$1.7 billion. It is the largest increase that we have ever had.

Mr. FILNER. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, we have heard that. We stipulated yesterday and for the last 2 months that the President's budget was irresponsible and not good policy. We are not passing here the President's budget. Throw that out. My colleagues cannot keep answering my criticisms and the country's criticisms that they do better than the President. The President did lousy. This is our budget and this budget is lousy.

This budget underfunds VA health care by \$1.5 billion, and until we correct that, the amendments that the gentlewoman is offering is going to be of little help.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to my colleague's amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from New York, who has put in so much time and energy into her staunch defense of veterans medical care for her district and for the rest of the State of New York. I think she has done it in a responsible way, unlike some others, who have talked about advocacy for the veterans and then offered funds that were not available; offered budgetary gimmicks to present the image that there are funds available for veterans health care that are not actually there.

There has been a lot of discussion today about the independent budget. If

this budget was so good, why did the American Legion, the largest veterans service organization in America, not support it? They did not. But they did support this budget.

The independent budget was presented by veterans advocacy groups at the beginning of the budget process as a marker. Blue sky, best possible scenario, this is what we would like. How many people, how many organizations have not done that in a discussion or in a negotiation? They ask for the sky, and they get what they need. And that is exactly what this budget provides; what the Veterans Administration needs to provide quality health care in America for our veterans.

Who am I talking about when I say that the veterans organizations support this bill? The American Legion supports this bill. The Veterans of Foreign Wars supports this level of funding. Noncommissioned Officers Association, Retired Enlisted Men's and Women's Association, the Military Coalition, the Military Order of the Purple Heart. Who would know better the importance of medical care for veterans than the Military Order of the Purple Heart? They endorse this bill. Jewish War Veterans, Gold Star Wives. Who would know better than a Gold Star wife or a Gold Star mother of the importance of veterans medical care than these women? They support this bill.

It is easy to wave a budget that was a negotiating position that was created months ago before the rubber met the road in terms of this budgetary process.

□ 1645

Fleet Reserve Association, Reserve Officers Association, National Military and Veterans Alliance, Retired Officers Association, Air Force Sergeants Association, Catholic War Veterans, National Association for Uniformed Services, Korean War Veterans Association.

Who are the experts? Who are the veterans? Who speaks for the veterans? I think the veterans.

Let them speak for themselves. And they have. Yes, the independent budget was presented as a negotiating piece. But if my colleagues ask these organizations what is the right number, they are going to tell them and they have told us \$1.7 billion is the right number.

The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) has produced a document that shows how each and every VISN around the country is affected positively by this bill. We have to proffer support for this level of funding. Those who would not vote for this bill do not get off scot free. There is a price, and the price is they go home and they say to their veterans, I could not support that bill. And they say, Why? We needed that money. We needed that \$1.7 billion.

And they are going to hold our feet to the fire if we do not support that level of funding. They know what is real and what is not real more than

most others do, and that \$3-billion figure is not real. The \$1.7 billion is real money for real people for real programs and real health care.

Getting back to the initial amendment, I reluctantly cannot support the amendment. I respectfully ask the gentlewoman to withdraw it. I know the VA in her district faces some difficult challenges. It does all over in the Northeast and the West, the Midwest. We heard that today. But I think we can address those issues outside of this amendment.

I promise to work with her and other Members representing VISN 3. We are going to make sure our staff is engaged with the leadership in VISN 3 to try to resolve these issues regarding her concerns.

So I would complete my comments by asking the gentlewoman to withdraw the amendment if she could.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Kelly amendment and in opposition to the proposed VA-HUD budget. I do so for a number of reasons.

First of all, I have some serious concerns about the proposed benefits for veterans, especially in the area of health care and housing. Almost every 3 or 4 months there is a discussion, there is a rumor, there is a report that one of the Veterans' Administration hospitals in my district is going to close. This raises the level of uncertainty among veterans in terms of whether or not they are going to be able to get the care that they so rightly deserve.

Neither do I believe that now is the time to decrease funding for space, environmental protection, FEMA, or the National Science Foundation.

However, Mr. Chairman, I take this time also to express strong opposition to the proposed cuts in the budget for HUD. This bill proposes to cut \$945 million less for HUD housing than was available in fiscal year 1999. This bill provides for \$982 million less than requested.

No funding is provided for new vouchers to provide assistance to additional families. It cuts public housing modernization by 15 percent, drug elimination grants by 6 percent, Hope VI, and generally distressed housing revitalization by 8 percent, housing opportunities for people with AIDS by 4 percent, community development block grant monies by 6 percent, community development block grant loan guarantees by 14 percent, Brownfields clean-up and development 20 percent less, lead-based paint abatement 13 percent less, fair housing activities 2 percent less, and the HOME program 1 percent less.

Under this bill, Chicago, Illinois, the center of the Midwest, will lose \$6,982,000; 527 jobs; 442 fewer housing units for low-income families; 77 fewer housing units for people with AIDS; 1,000 vouchers for Section 8; 33,000

fewer home buyers. It takes away support services for 43,000 homeless people. Thirty thousand homeless people will have no emergency beds, and 6,500 people with AIDS will be without services. And 212,500 people overall will not have any aid which they could get without these cuts.

There is indeed a rental housing crisis in America, and this bill falls \$1.6 billion short of U.S. needs. And without these greatly needed 100,000 Section 8 vouchers, matters will become significantly worse.

So, Mr. Chairman, you see, this bill, while well-meaning, while thorough efforts have been made to analyze it, while serious attention has been given to it, the real fact of the matter is that it undercuts the very basic needs and services of those constituents that it was designed to help.

So I would urge that we go back ultimately to the drawing board. It does not provide veterans with the care that they need. It does not provide the level of assurance that veterans need to have.

So again, I reiterate my support for the Kelly amendment and urge its passage.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY).

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I would like to engage in a short dialogue with the chairman of the committee if I may.

Mr. Chairman, my concern is closing of the hospitals because I see the hospitals as being a piece of the assets that the VA actually owns. I look at an aging veterans population that is strongly in need of support in terms of assisted living and skilled nursing and that type of care; and I am concerned that if we step down these assets, which are currently full care, acute care hospitals, that we are closing a possibility, closing a doorway for those elderly veterans.

I would like to ask the chairman of the committee if he would help me and work with me through addressing these assets that we have in trying to use them in a better way. I think it is very important that the enhanced use lease authority be addressed in this manner and used in this manner.

I think that I could perhaps comfortably withdraw this amendment if I can get that kind of a pledge from the committee.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I would pledge to the gentlewoman that we would make it a priority to work with her to make sure that the facts and figures on services and properties and everything within each individual VISN were provided for review to make sure that these assets are being dealt with

and used wisely and in a proper way and, as I said earlier, providing staff to help to resolve some of the issues in VISN 3. I pledge that support to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman would yield further, I ask that there be an ability for those of us who are not on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and for Congress as a whole to have an opportunity to see more clearly, with more transparency, some of the ways that the VA is using money within each individual VISN.

At present, I am not able to get those figures, and that also inhibits my ability to ascertain how carefully the money that is being allocated is being used by the regional visions.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman would yield further, let me be brief because I know the gentleman is waiting to reclaim his time and it is precious.

We have requested that report as soon as it may be available to us. We will share it with the gentlewoman and work through those issues with her.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman would yield further, if all options could be explored, that would include the enhanced use authority, then I would be willing to ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) be given an additional 2 minutes.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I simply rise at this point to speak directly to the issue of what we are doing in this veterans budget under the leadership of the subcommittee chairman. We are increasing veterans health care spending by \$1.7 billion. That represents an increase of almost 10 percent.

One of the concerns that I actually have with this very generous increase is I do not know if the VA will be able to spend all this money efficiently. I would not be surprised if they have some of the money left over. That is a huge increase for the agency to absorb.

By giving them these additional funds, there will not be any hospitals closed. If anything, what will happen is the badly underserved areas like the district that I represent, the whole State of Florida, and what the gentleman from California is saying is that, no, a 20-percent increase is necessary and anything short of a 20-percent increase is underfunding.

Frankly, I believe that position is ridiculous and the chairman of the subcommittee has clearly spelled out that

the veterans organizations are behind this. I think this is a very clear statement that the Republican Party, the Republicans in Congress, support our veterans and we are giving a very, very generous increase in this budget to veterans affairs. And to hold out a pie-in-the-sky number of, no, \$3 billion and anything short of that is underfunding I believe is ludicrous.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, reserving the right to object, let me first say to the gentleman from Florida and the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee, the \$3 billion figure is not my figure. It comes from a process that was initiated and sustained by the major veterans organizations in this Nation. They came up with a professional budget that was designed to accommodate the basic needs of the health care system, needs that had been left unmet for the last 5 years.

When the gentleman from Florida says that he doubts that they would be able to use the funds, I would refer him to the Alzheimer's patients who are being released from hospitals because there are not the funds to keep them. I will refer the gentleman to hepatitis C victims, almost 2 million of them, who are suffering from a potentially fatal disease with no money to meet their health care needs. I would refer the gentleman to the Persian Gulf War illness victims who cannot get either their treatment or the explanation for their illness in any respectful fashion because there are no funds to do that.

Every veteran in this Nation will tell us that there are needs that can be met, and I suspect that the veterans organizations think that the \$1.7 billion that the chairman should be commended for achieving, and I do not understate that achievement, I say to the chairman, given the numbers they have to work with. And please take my criticism as of the process and not of my colleague, because I think he and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) did an incredibly good job in plussing that up.

But I would argue that it is still insufficient given the needs and given the aging population and given the new areas that we have discovered that need to be dealt with.

I would remind the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), who is the chairman of the subcommittee, this \$1.7 billion plus-up which comes out of the Republican budget resolution rests on a down-minus, if I can use that word, over the next 10 years. That is, the VA budget will start decreasing based on their numbers and for the biggest decrease in our history.

□ 1700

So we have not sufficiently funded this budget, and I would say to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), I suspect that if he gave those organizations a vote between this budget and my budget, mine would win. We would have letters supporting that.

So once again, I say to the veterans of this Nation, this Congress is poised to pass a bill that does not meet the health care needs, does not meet the commitment and benefits that we have promised; and we should vote it down and say to the veterans, we can do better.

Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my reservation of objection to the unanimous consent request.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. KLECZKA

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. KLECZKA:

At the end of the bill, insert after the last section (preceding the short title) the following new section:

SEC. . None of the funds made available in this Act may be used by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to promulgate final national primary drinking water standards for Radium 226 and 228 under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Chairman, as the reading of the amendment indicates, this amendment would prevent the EPA from using fiscal year 2000 funds to promulgate a final rule regarding radium in drinking water.

The EPA, I am told, intends to issue a rule later in the year 2000 using a five pico curies per liter standard, the smallest amount measurable.

This issue has been addressed by Congress before. In 1996, Congress required EPA to delay a proposed standard for radon and radium until the National Research Council prepared a risk assessment on both substances.

At that point, I should add, the level talked about by or discussed by the EPA was a 20 pico curies level in drinking water.

The EPA finally did complete the study on radon but failed to study radium. The EPA cites the study on airborne radon as evidence that exceeding the level of radium in water beyond five pico curies per liter may result in adverse health effects.

The EPA is moving ahead on radium even though the study's authors are careful to note in the findings that, and I quote, "Whether these considerations also hold for other carcinogens such as X-rays was not an issue that was addressed by this committee."

This rule will affect over 600 communities nationwide. A water utility in my district and the district of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) estimates that it would cost

rate payers about \$40 million to build a treatment facility that will enable them to comply with EPA's mandates.

What we ask through adoption of this amendment is for the EPA to gather the scientific data on the health effects of radium in our water and to determine at what level the standard should be set.

This can be done by conducting two studies: a bone cancer risk study, which is a population-based study that will assess the association of radium in drinking water with the occurrence of bone cancer; and a second study, a cellular biomarker study which will answer the question of whether drinking water exceeding the five pico curies per liter level will cause harmful effects in the blood cells of water drinkers.

I urge support for this amendment, which will prohibit the EPA from formulating a rule about the effects of drinking water containing low levels of radium before our water utilities spend millions on what could be a non-existent problem.

Congress asked for a risk assessment before. Evidently we must insist on this study again.

Mr. Chairman, I urge support of this amendment.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment, obviously, is a fairly important development in this bill and it takes the form of what most people would refer to as a rider, legislative rider. The consequences of the amendment are not clear, intended or unintended consequences. There just does not seem to be enough information available right now, at least for this Member, to make a determination as to whether or not this is a good idea or a bad idea, whether it helps or hurts the bill.

I know some other Members have expressed some concerns about this; not any clear opposition to it but just concerns about what this will eventuate for EPA and for our communities.

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KLECZKA) has shown some real sincere concern for his communities. I have been addressed by some of my communities about the fact that some of these regulations the EPA lays on the communities are expensive; it puts a huge burden on them and I understand those concerns.

What I would ask, and I would be happy to yield time to the gentleman for debate purposes, to ask if he would consider withdrawing this amendment with the thought that as we go into conference there might be a way to address this issue in a less restrictive way, possibly some report language, something to that effect.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALSH. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, let me say I very much understand what motivates my colleague, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KLECZKA), to offer this amendment.

I have not the foggiest idea whether the standard being proposed or even contemplated by the agency is the correct one. My problem is that I have stood many times on this floor and resisted congressional efforts to, on the basis of a very short debate, reach what, in essence, is a scientific conclusion to prohibit an agency charged with protecting public health from taking whatever action they think is necessary to protect the public health.

It seems to me the best way to approach things is to try to work together and go to the agency and to insist informally that they produce hard evidence that what they are doing makes sense.

My concern with the gentleman's amendment goes to simply one word: prohibit. I do not know enough to either prohibit or to encourage what they are doing, and I would urge that the gentleman follow the advice of the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH). I think that is the most constructive way to try to work together to get the right answer. None of us want to see municipalities or anybody else have to incur expenses that are not necessary. Even though in this instance it is my own State, I don't feel comfortable in, in essence, making a legislative judgment about a scientific matter until we ourselves know what we are talking about.

At this point, the gentleman from Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Mr. KLECZKA) may be comfortable in assessing what the agency is doing, but I know this Member is not.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALSH. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I agree with both the chairman of the subcommittee and my colleague, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY). I do not know what the correct level of radium in the water should be.

However, I should point out to the Members that at one point the EPA was saying that level should be 20 pico Curies, which is a measurement of radio activity in water. Now they are coming by to the various communities saying that level should be five.

Well, Congress some years ago in 1996 asked them for a study and to give us some hard evidence. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) says we should have some hard evidence so we can make that decision. I agree totally with that statement. We already asked for that and the EPA has not been forthcoming. Yes, they did the study on radon and they linked the radium standard to a radon study, which is totally inappropriate.

So I agree with the chairman that hopefully we can work on some report language. I was told just a few hours ago that now the EPA was not going to

issue this regulation, this rule, in fiscal year 2000 anyway.

My information coming to the debate on this was it was going to be later in the year 2000; and later in 2000, in my book, could be August, could be September, could be before the fiscal year. So if, in fact, it is true that this rule is not going to come down before the year 2001, I think the amendment can be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. WALSH was allowed to proceed for 2 additional minutes.)

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Chairman, if in fact the rule is not going to be promulgated until the year 2001, clearly that would give the EPA an opportunity to provide for a study, one of the two studies that I think I cited or any other study so they can come before Congress and say now the level should be five, 7½, 10, or whatever it ends up being and we will abide by that, but we do not have that before us.

So hopefully between now and the conference committee on this bill we can at least ask, gently ask, the EPA would they please do the study that the Congress asked for in 1996, so the other communities involved can finally make a judgment.

Mr. Chairman, with the understanding that we are going to work together on some type of language, I would withdraw the amendment.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KLECZKA) for his wisdom and for his willingness to work with us on this issue. I think it is the proper approach; and we will work together on it, and I appreciate it.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Kleczka-Sensenbrenner amendment. This amendment would prohibit the EPA from using funds to promulgate a final rule on drinking water standards for radium that is not based on sound science. In 1991, the EPA proposed a standard for radium in drinking water of 20 pico curies per liter (pCi/L). However, the EPA now intends to mandate a far more stringent level of 5 pCi/L. This apparently arbitrary restriction was recommended before proper scientific evidence to support it was gathered.

To defend this restriction, the EPA cites a study on airborne radon by the National Research Council as supporting evidence that radium in drinking water beyond 5 pCi/L may have negative health effects despite the fact that the authors of this study state that their work did not consider the effects of carcinogens other than radon, including radium. Promoting regulations that are not based on sound science is becoming a pattern at the EPA. The Agency has mandated that parts of the country use reformulated gasoline, including gasoline with the additive MTBE. MTBE pollutes ground and surface water supplies rendering it unusable for drinking water. Recently, a National Research Council report found that oxygenates, including MTBE do little to clean up our air. An EPA Blue Ribbon Panel found that MTBE is seriously damaging

our nation's water. Judging by these reports, the EPA has done serious damage to our water, while doing very little for our air. That's bad science.

The EPA has often supported the need to regulate before the science is complete, arguing that the risk of doing nothing is too great even when the cost of their proposals is incredibly high. In the global climate change debate, the EPA supports proposals based on shaky science would cause gasoline prices to rise by 50 cents a gallon and household energy costs to rise \$900 to \$1,000 a year according to the Wharton Econometric Forecasting Association.

Similarly, if promulgated, the EPA's revised radium rule would be incredibly costly. A water utility in both my District and Congressman KLECZKA's District estimates that it would cost \$70 million to build and operate a facility to comply with the 5 pCi/L restriction. The cost for the new facility would be passed on to utility consumers. This water utility estimates that its rates may need to be raised to four times their current level. The cost-hike will hurt businesses and families alike. Average homeowners may see their water utility costs rise \$200 to \$800 per year.

This is not a problem isolated to Wisconsin. In fact, 25 states have water utilities that are above the 5 pCi/L level. The costs that this rule would impose on my district would be duplicated many-fold across the country.

The EPA should closely study the direct human health implications of radium in drinking water before imposing such a costly regulation. This amendment will provide time for the EPA to conduct these necessary tests. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment, knowing full well I will be back next year.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to engage the chairman in a colloquy if he would do so.

I appreciate the opportunity to work with the chairman as part of the negotiations on this bill in order to obtain a one-time emergency funding designation for an important project in my district. The Los Angeles County sanitation districts urgently need funds to replace a sewer line beneath the Santa Clara River in my district.

Following the El Nino storms in the winter of 1998, the Federal Emergency Management Agency declared Los Angeles County a disaster area. While the sewer lines have not yet leaked, storm-related erosion in the river bed did cause significant damage to the lines. Further erosions may very well cause the rupture of the lines releasing up to 8 million gallons of raw sewage per day into the Santa Clara River and eventually the Pacific Ocean.

To permanently solve this problem, the sanitation districts have proposed a sound, one-time engineering solution that involves moving the pipelines deeper underground. This proposal is

the best solution, both from an engineering standpoint and from an environmental standpoint as well.

Unfortunately, both FEMA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service disagree on the manner to solve this problem, leaving it up to Congress to fill the void and protect both the residents and the environment of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

I appreciate the work of the chairman to date on this legislation and look forward to working with him to obtain a solution to this issue as the legislation moves along in the legislative process.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. McKEON. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON) for his comments and his cooperation in this project. I know of his deep concern for the safety and well being of his constituents. We recognize the importance of this project and the need to obtain funding to resolve it before winter storms further damage the sewer line. I look forward to working with the gentleman to see if indeed we can find a solution as this legislation proceeds. I pledge my cooperation with him.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. WEYGAND

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. WEYGAND:  
At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. . It is the sense of congress that, along with health care, housing, education, and other benefits, the presence of an honor guard at a veteran's funeral is a benefit that a veteran has earned, and, therefore, the executive branch should provide funeral honor details for the funerals of veterans when requested, in accordance with law.

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief. I have discussed this with the subcommittee chairman and with the ranking member as well. As we all know, we have been discussing very important benefits to veterans last night and today, benefits with regard to education, particularly with regard to health care; but perhaps one of the most critical and important benefits to veterans is that that is given to their family and the honor that they give to those veterans at the time of their burial.

We all in this chamber have heard many different stories about the lack of an honor guard at a veteran's funeral when requested. We have heard stories about sometimes they do not show up. Other times we have heard stories where they are actually leaving before the funeral party actually comes to the burial site.

I think it is a disaster and a catastrophe that veterans, after having served and provided us with great service for many, many years, that unfortunately we do not sometimes provide the necessary honor guard at their burial. So I ask that we include this sense



of Congress at the end of the bill. The ranking member and the subcommittee chairman have talked to me about it, and we have crafted language.

I want to, first of all, thank the ranking member's staff for helping us with the language, and also I want to thank the chairman who has agreed to this amendment, I believe, with regard to this language. I also want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), who could not be here tonight who is also a cosponsor of this amendment.

□ 1715

This amendment is something that many of the families and veterans are looking for because indeed at their final hour we should not forget them, we should not ever forget the service that they have provided to all of us, and I hope that this will be passed.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, we accept the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. WEYGAND).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. EHLERS

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 4 offered by Mr. EHLERS:

At the end of the bill, insert after the last section (preceding the short title) the following new section:

SEC. \_\_\_\_ The amounts otherwise provided in this Act are revised by increasing the amount provided for "National Science Foundation—Research and Related Activities", increasing the amount provided for "National Science Foundation—Major Research Equipment", increasing the amount provided for "National Science Foundation—Education and Human Resources", and reducing each amount provided in this Act (other than for the National Science Foundation) that is not required to be provided by a provision of law, by \$156,524,000, \$33,500,000, \$40,000,000, and 0.354 percent, respectively.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this amendment is to increase the appropriations for the National Science Foundation. I must begin by commending the subcommittee chairman in dealing with a very difficult budget and commend him for the good work he has done on it. I was opposed to the allocation given to this subcommittee. I felt at the time it was granted that it was far too small, and we would end up with the type of difficulties we have encountered here. It is my hope that during the rest of the appropriations process this allocation will be increased.

What I wish to point out here, and it is extremely important, is the importance of scientific research to the future economic growth of this Nation as well as furthering basic knowledge of our universe and all that it contains. Furthermore, I want to discuss the importance of science and math education in this Nation.

Let me point out some of the problems. I have here a graph which shows that United States funding has been decreasing compared to some other countries. The national nondefense R&D as a percentage of gross domestic product is now lower in this Nation than it is in Japan and Germany, and the rate at which Japan is increasing is greater than our rate. The main difficulty of this is that, as is currently estimated, over half of the economic development of this Nation comes from developments resulting from research in science and technology, and if we do not do this research in science and technology, we are ruining the seed corn for our future economic growth; we are also doing a great disservice to our children and grandchildren by doing that.

Let me give a few examples. The Internet is, of course, one obvious result which rose out of basic research in math, computer science, electronics and physics over the past several decades. Everyone today knows how valuable the Internet is and how it is contributing to economic growth.

Another example is magnetic resonance imaging, which has its roots back in the 1950s when I was a graduate student in physics at the University of California. Today we cannot imagine dealing with many difficult health problems without an MRI machine.

Also consider lasers, again a development based on research done 40 years ago, resulting in a multi, multi-billion dollar industry developed from a small amount of research funding. In summary, we must continue our research efforts if we are going to maintain our economic growth and continue to be a world leader.

Furthermore, the funding for major research equipment has been cut in this budget, and that is very unfortunate because this funding provides the tools with which scientists make discoveries.

Now on to math and science education; that is a sad tale. A few years ago, we completed the third international mathematics science study and found that the United States is near the bottom of all the developed countries in the ability of its high-school graduates to understand and use math and science. Near the bottom! And yet we maintain that we are the leader of the world in science and technology. Our potential for the future is hurt very badly by not having an adequate math and science education system. Once again, the National Science Foundation plays a major role in improving our education, and we have to provide them funds for that.

My amendment does not seek extravagant funding, it simply brings the NSF budget up to the level which has been recommended by the Committee on Science in the authorization bill that it has passed. That is certainly reasonable. However, the appropriation bill before us actually reduces the amount of money going to the National

Science Foundation, the first time in decades that the National Science Foundation budget will be reduced. My amendment will bring it up to an appropriate level, and I would very much like to see this amendment adopted.

At the same time, as I have indicated, I recognize the difficulty the chairman of the subcommittee has had in reaching appropriate funding levels for the National Science Foundation. Therefore I do not plan to pursue this amendment at this point, but I would like to engage the chairman in a very brief interchange. My intent is to withdraw this amendment, but I would certainly appreciate it if the chairman would first recognize the worthy direction this amendment outlines.

I know that he would like to increase the funding of the National Science Foundation, and I hope that he can give us assurances that, as we go through the appropriations process, not only in the House but also in the Senate, the conference committee and negotiating with the White House, he will consider this request. I would very much appreciate an expression of support on the part of the subcommittee chairman that he will seek to meet the goals I have outlined in my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, there is no question that this subcommittee considers National Science Foundation a high priority. Everyone has recognized the difficulties within this bill. One of the difficult decisions we made was to reduce NSF by just 1 percent below the 1999 level. Now that is a cut; there is no question. But no other account in this bill except for VA medical care was treated as well as NSF. In fact, research at NSF was actually increased by \$8.5 million relative to 1999.

Now I know that does not comfort the gentleman because he is one of the leaders in the Congress in terms of scientific research. He has been a spokesman and a stalwart for research. This subcommittee understands the plight that we placed NSF in, and I assure the gentleman that this is a priority, that if there is any way as we go through the process that we can provide some additional funds for NSF we will, and we will call upon him to help us to make that happen and to provide us some direction as to where those funds should go.

I cannot make any ironclad assurances other than that he will have our cooperation in the event that that occurs.

Mr. EHLERS. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate the assurances of the subcommittee chairman. I do want to comment on one factor he alluded to.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. EHLERS was allowed to proceed for 1 additional minute.)

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to comment to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) that the \$8.5 million increase he indicated is in the research and related activities line item, and that increase was wiped out by the Nadler amendment which was adopted yesterday. So we are now down to zero increase there; and, in fact, the overall NSF budget, because of the decreases in major research equipment and education and human resources funding, is reduced a net 1 percent in this appropriation bill at this point. I do thank him for his assurances that he will seek to correct this as we go through the process, and I pledge to help him.

Mr. Chairman, on that note, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. TANCREDO

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. TANCREDO:  
Page 94, after line 3, insert the following new section:

SEC. 424. The amounts otherwise provided by this Act are revised by increasing the amount made available for "DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS—Departmental Administration—Grants for Construction of State Extended Care Facilities", by reducing the amount made available for "INDEPENDENT AGENCIES—Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board—Salaries and Expenses", and by reducing the amount made available for "INDEPENDENT AGENCIES—Environmental Protection Agency—Office of Inspector General", by \$7,000,000, \$2,000,000, and \$5,000,000, respectively.

Mr. TANCREDO (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Chairman, first of all let me say that it is a tribute to the work of this committee and to the subcommittee and its chairman that it has been very difficult to find the necessary offsets to do what we hope to do in this amendment, and that is to increase the amount for State extended-care facilities program by \$7 million. We are, however, proposing to do that, and we do recognize the commitment of the committee, and I want to once again say that it was a very difficult task.

I am not here asking for more money. I recognize fully well that the total bill is a very rich bill considering what he had available to him and considering what we had available to us and what the committee had available to work with. It is our hope to convince both the committee and the

other Members of the Congress, of the House of Representatives, that we need to shift the priorities to a certain extent, to a very small extent, totaling again as I said only \$7 million into the State extended-care facilities program. These are the nursing homes that we build across the country, and these are facilities that, by the way, are built with State matching funds, so it is a bigger bang for the buck that we get for this.

The President's budget suggested only a \$40 million appropriations level. The committee quite appropriately increased that dramatically. In fact, increased it a hundred percent, increased it to \$80 million. That is still \$10 million below last year's level, and therefore we are concerned. We are concerned because 36 percent of all veterans who are over the age of 65, and that number is expected to increase exponentially over the next 8 years. We are concerned that there are 25.2 million veterans as of July 1, 1998 of whom 19.3 million have served during at least one period defined as, quote, war time, concerned that in 2010 over half of the veterans population will be over the age of 62.

An increasing in age of most veterans means additional demands for medical services for eligible veterans as aging brings on chronic conditions needing more frequent care and lengthier convalescence. A third of all the veterans will undoubtedly put a strain on our Nation's veterans health services. At the current pace of construction, we will not have the necessary facilities to meet veterans extended care needs.

This is a cost share program, as I mentioned, with the State, so money that goes into this account is multiplied by the State's commitment to build and run the facility. Last year, as I mentioned, the House and Senate approved \$90 million for the State extended facilities construction program, so this is the present bill. It anticipates a \$10 million reduction below that.

In truth, even if our amendment is successful in restoring at least \$7 million of the funding approaching last year's level, it still may be not enough to meet the actual need for construction. Unfortunately, we still remain \$15 million short of the funding that the State associations of veterans nursing homes say they need to meet construction deadlines.

This amendment will be offset by minor reductions in the funding for various accounts, the EPA facilities management, chemical safety investigations, work salaries, and expenses.

I recognize that in every single, and believe, I want to reiterate the fact that we looked very carefully for places where we could go to offset this. It was very difficult because this is a tight budget, and I fully understand that and commend the committee and the staff for their work. It is nonetheless our hope that we can encourage our colleagues to join in this small way

in this very minor adjustment change a priority here that we think is extremely important.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in reluctant opposition to the gentleman's amendment, and I know he has given this a great deal of his attention, it is a high priority for him and his constituency, and, in fact, as I understand it, it is a high priority for the Nation. This is a well thought of project, and this account that he has referred to, grants for construction State extended-care facilities, is a very important account. These are funds that are dear, that everyone across the country is covetous of, and what we have provided is \$80 million. That is twice the President's request. President requested 40 million; we put in 80 million. The gentleman is absolutely correct; it is 10 million below last year, but it is a substantial increase over what the President requested.

As I understand it, it is conceivable, given the allocation, that the project that he has supported could conceivably be funded in this allocation. There is no guarantees obviously, but what I would say, cannot support taking these funds out because we would be reducing the EPA Inspector General's office by 17 percent. It is important that we keep an eye on that bureaucracy, and that is the Inspector General's job.

But what I would be happy to do as we go through the process and into the conferences is try to find a way to help the gentleman meet his goal without increasing his funding and thereby cutting funding in the other area of the bill. So, I again reluctantly oppose the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word and rise in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, we have had a lot of worthy causes advanced here by Members today, Members wanting to increase funding in different accounts, recognizing that in most of those instances the committee wanted to raise the money in those accounts, but not being able to do so because of our skinny allocation.

The gentleman from Colorado's amendment is another worthy amendment. State veterans homes are extremely important, and as he points out, the veterans population is aging, and so they will become increasingly important.

So I want to first acknowledge the worthiness of the gentleman's amendment and its purpose.

Let me first say that the committee recognized the importance of this program and increased the funding above the request; I believe doubled it. I think the gentleman indicated that, from \$40 to \$80 million.

□ 1730

That is not enough. It is not last year's funding. Perhaps as the process goes forward, this will be one of those accounts as we get more money that we can plus up.

But I must say, however worthy the cause is, the offsets are the worst I have seen today, proposing to offset, and the gentleman has reduced his offsets to two now. Offsetting the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board by \$2 million is a huge cut. It is a 22 percent cut to the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board's budget.

I had a letter last March from the chairman of this board, this investigation board, which investigates chemical accidents around the country, suggesting that under its current spending levels, that it probably would not be able to continue investigations through the end of the fiscal year. This board, as we need more money for State veterans homes, the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board needs even more money to do its job.

Cutting it 22 percent would be the absolutely wrong thing to do. This is an extremely important mission that the board fulfills. It is having difficulty fulfilling it under its current spending rate, and cutting it would be just disastrous and prevent it from being able to carry out its mission. We do not want to do that, and I am sure the gentleman from Colorado does not want to do that.

The second offset the gentleman proposes is equally difficult. It is an offset to EPA's Inspector General account, a \$5 million cut, which is a 12 percent cut to the Inspector General's account.

Now, the Inspector General's office is the office that is responsible for investigating waste, fraud and abuse, which I am sure the gentleman is very much against in agencies. I am sure the gentleman wants inspector generals out there investigating the agencies to ensure that we do not have waste, fraud and abuse, and to ensure, which is the other mission of the Inspector General, that the laws and regulations that EPA is supposed to carry forward are carried forward properly. This is a 12 percent cut to the Inspector General's office. The Inspector General cannot stand a 12 percent cut in their budget.

In summary, Mr. Chairman, while I support the objective of the gentleman's amendment, the offsets are really difficult and, in and of themselves, make the amendment unacceptable. I would encourage my colleagues to vote against it.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment, and I also rise in support of this appropriations legislation.

I want to particularly salute the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for his leadership in putting together a good bill. It is always tough when you want more money for important programs, and veterans clearly are a priority for this Congress.

I also want to salute the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for his efforts to provide what will be historically the largest increase in veterans

health care funding ever in the history of this country, \$1.7 billion in additional funding for veterans health care. I want to salute the chairman for those efforts.

I also want to note why this amendment is so important. I ask my colleagues as you look at this amendment to think about your own States. If your States have veterans homes, if they want to expand, if they need improvements, if they need to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this program is pretty important.

Earlier this year the administration, the Clinton-Gore administration, slashed the funding for State nursing home grants. In fact, they slashed the program by more than half, from \$90 million in current funding to \$40 million for the coming year. That was wrong. That was bad policy. That is why I appreciate the efforts of the subcommittee to work to restore those funds. But we need to do more.

Last year the funding was \$80 million. This year it is \$90 million. This amendment would increase the funding by \$7 million, would bring it close to the current level of funding.

We note that the current grant program gives States millions in funds to help them expand and build new nursing homes for our veterans. It also helps our States meet compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, with renovations to existing homes, as well as expansion in homes. My own State of Illinois is owed over \$5 million in back payments because of the inability to provide the full amount that is necessary.

This is important also to note that there were over 88 applications currently pending, totaling \$348 million. With this funding, we will provide \$87 million. There is also \$240 million in requests for new construction.

Clearly there is tremendous need out there, particularly as the World War II and Korea era veterans reach the age where they require greater health care, many needing nursing home care, this is so important.

I would also like to point out that State veterans homes are pretty good bang for the buck. They provide quality service for our veterans, but also a savings to taxpayers. VA nursing home care or nursing care is about \$255 a day for a veteran, but the State homes on average provide services for about \$40 per day. Clearly it is a bargain, quality health care at veterans homes for our veterans.

I would also note that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the authorizing committee, along with the State home directors, recommended that we should provide \$100 million this year. This helps work towards that goal.

What it means to my home State of Illinois, of course, Illinois is a major State with a lot of veterans. Illinois is in need of expansion of veterans homes. The LaSalle veterans home has a year and a half waiting list. If you think about it, if you have a family member

who needs to go into a veterans home, 18 months is a long time to wait to be able to obtain a bed in that nursing home. So clearly funds are needed.

I would also point out not only is Illinois owed \$5 million in back payments, but the Manteno veterans home, which happens to be in my district, is still owed back payments for ADA compliance.

There is a need out there. This amendment is a good amendment. It helps restore the funding to the current levels. It is badly needed.

Again, I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for his efforts and particularly for the historic increase of \$1.7 billion in additional new funding for veterans health care. I salute you, Mr. Chairman, for those efforts.

Let us support our veterans. I ask all the Members of this House to take a close look at this amendment. Let us make sure the funds are there to ensure our veterans who need nursing home care have it at the State level. This is an important grant program.

I urge an aye vote. Let us support our veterans. Let us reject the Clinton administration's horrible cuts. Let us restore these funds and help veterans who need nursing home care. Please vote aye. This legislation deserves a bipartisan show of support and an aye vote.

Mr. HILLEARY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, first off I would like to commend the chairman for his hard work and the staff. Obviously you all crafted a great bill here. I must rise today in support of this amendment to increase the funding for the veterans state-extended care facilities. These facilities in my opinion are imperative to the mission of providing quality health care to those who dutifully served our country.

These veterans homes are the largest provider of long-term nursing care to our veterans. They enable the Veterans Administration to ensure quality nursing care to veterans that cannot receive proper treatment through any other means. Many of the men and women who served our country are bedridden due to service-related injuries. It is these veterans that the state-extended care facilities will serve.

Not only are these homes, nursing care units and hospitals necessary for proper care, they are also cost effective. If a veteran is forced to go to a private nursing home, the VA will reimburse that home on average \$124 per diem. Contrast that with the approximately \$44 per diem reimbursement to the State veterans homes for the same care. I think you will agree that for this reason alone we should vigorously support these facilities.

Even with the Tancred-Weller amendment enacted, we will fall far short of the funding commitment we have made to the States. The Federal Government has agreed to fund 65 percent of the construction costs for the

state-extended care facilities. At this time, many States have already appropriated their share of the construction costs.

Aside from the current \$104 million backlog of work due to previous years of underfunding, the Federal Government could be responsible for up to \$204 million in additional construction money, if all pending applications are approved. In other words, even with this amendment, we still owe various States across the Nation up to \$218 million.

By the rapidly approaching year 2000, there are expected to be approximately 9.3 million veterans over the age of 65. World War II veterans continue to require extensive health care that we are proud and obligated to provide. This country and the VA must be adequately prepared through proper funding to handle the challenge of ensuring the best possible care for the men and women who bravely served this Nation.

This is a similar amendment to the one that I offered last year on this appropriations bill, and it was difficult, I know, for the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) to find the offset, but I commend his efforts for the veterans in his district and across the country. I ask that we strongly support his amendment on the floor.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) will be postponed.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to request that the distinguished subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), allow me a few moments that I may engage him in a friendly colloquy regarding this legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I would say to the gentleman from New York (Mr. Walsh), for the record, I have been in contact with your staff regarding funding for a wastewater treatment plant in Placer County, which is within my district. Due to an oversight, this project was unfortunately not included in the VA-HUD bill that is now before us.

I would ask that the chairman, as we move forward in consideration of this bill, work to ensure that \$1 million in funding be provided for the Placer County wastewater treatment project.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DOOLITTLE. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I appreciate the continued interest in this important project in his district in

Placer County. I assure the gentleman that we will work very closely with the gentleman to address this funding matter in our conference negotiations.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I thank the chairman.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask my distinguished colleague, the ranking member from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), to join me in a colloquy.

Mr. Chairman, it has come to my attention that HUD recently issued a notice of funding availability, NOFA, for the Resident Opportunities and Self-sufficiency program. This program contains a component for service coordinator grants.

For those of you not familiar with service coordinators, they help elderly and disabled residents in public housing get the unique services they require. The program is cost effective and the residents of public housing love the program, as do the housing authorities.

Because of its success, Congress has agreed in the last funding cycle to provide sufficient funds to renew all existing service coordinator programs. Unfortunately, the recent NOFA contains several troubling provisions that seem to defy congressional intent and jeopardize the ability of many public housing authorities to obtain renewal of their service coordinator funding.

Specifically, one provision provides public housing authorities to have to spend 75 percent of their award by August, even though the PHAs only received notice of the grant in April. As a practical matter, it is impossible for any PHA to expend 75 percent of their funds by the first of August, but under the NOFA they must have done so in order to qualify for renewal spending for next year.

Another provision of the NOFA states that the funds will be provided on a first-come-first-served-basis. This provision implies that there are insufficient funds to pay for renewals. Congress has been assured repeatedly by HUD that funds are sufficient to pay for renewal. Therefore, the provision is unnecessary.

After being apprised of congressional concerns, HUD has agreed to make changes to the NOFA. In fact, HUD has assured me that an amended NOFA will be published in the Federal Register in the near future.

I appreciate the alacrity with which HUD has acted on this matter and want to assure public housing residents that this program will be fully funded this year and next.

I know the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) shares my opinion that service coordinators are vitally important and would turn to him for a comment on this issue.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALSH. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I would first like to commend the chairman for his efforts on the service coordinator issue. I second the gentleman's comments.

Our subcommittee has heard over and over about just how valuable the service coordinator committee program can be for elderly and disabled residents of public housing.

The subcommittee intended that funds appropriated in the fiscal 1999 year for the resident opportunity and self-sufficiency program be used, among other purposes, to renew all expiring service coordinator grants. I share the chairman's concern about provisions of the recent notice of funds availability that could jeopardize those renewals.

□ 1745

I am pleased that HUD has agreed to revise the notice in order to make sure that congressional intent is carried out.

I look forward to working with the chairman and other members of the subcommittee to ensure that adequate funding continues to be provided to allow renewal of these service coordinator grants in future years.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his comments and his cooperation and help on this matter and so many others as we proceeded through this bill.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

(Mr. STUMP asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Chairman, veterans across the country will appreciate the efforts of this subcommittee, under the able leadership of the gentleman from New York, for including an historic \$1.7 billion increase for VA health care, over and above the Administration's flat line budget request.

This is the largest increase for VA health care, and should be supported by all Members.

The increase the bill addresses that needs that were identified in the President's budget but not funded including \$1.2 billion for personnel costs, so that no VA employees will have to be laid off for lack of system-wide funding; \$200 million for services to veterans with hepatitis C; \$100 million for the first-year cost of providing emergency care for uninsured veterans, and \$150 million for long-term health care services for aging veterans.

The chairman read the list of those veterans service organizations that are supporting this bill. I will not repeat that. I would like to take this time, though, to thank the chairman for the very difficult and tremendous job he has done in crafting this legislation, as well as the gentleman from West Virginia.

We should support this unprecedented level of funding in this bill for veterans' health care and commit to working together for next year to

make sure that our veterans are given the quality of health care that they earn and deserve.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Chairman, the Administration's budget request was criticized on a bipartisan basis.

We should be addressing the shortcomings of that budget on the same bipartisan basis.

The \$1.7 billion increase in the bill for VA health care will fulfill our Nation's commitment to veterans.

This level of funding is supported by the:

Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Non Commissioned Officers Association.

Retired Enlisted Association.

The Military Coalition (a consortium of uniformed services organizations representing more than 5 million members) including:

Military Order of the Purple Heart.

Jewish War Veterans.

Gold Star Wives.

Marine Corps League.

National Guard Association.

Fleet Reserve Association.

Reserve Officers Association.

National Military and Veterans Alliance (with 20 military and veterans member organizations) including:

Retired Officers Association.

Air Force Sergeants Association.

Catholic War Veterans.

National Association for Uniformed Services.

Korean War Veterans Association.

Unfortunately, some Members are trying to increase funding beyond what is needed this year, and in the process they are dragging some of the veterans' organizations into a very partisan political game of one-upmanship.

We should not be playing politics with the benefits that are provided by a grateful nation to veterans.

We should support the unprecedented level of funding in this bill for veterans' health care and commit to working together to make sure that next year's budget also provides the funding necessary to give veterans the quality of health care services they have earned and deserve.

I urge my colleagues to vote for the bill.

**\$1.7 BILLION VA MEDICAL SPENDING HIKE—OCCASION FOR CELEBRATION**

Nearly a year ago, a bipartisan group of Congressmen and Senators urged the President to hike VA medical care spending for fiscal year 2000 by 10 percent, up an additional \$1.7 billion.

The President proposed instead that Congress freeze VA medical spending. The Congressional Budget Resolution subsequently adopted the recommendations of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees that VA medical care spending should be increased by a record \$1.7 billion.

With Congress now set to vote on a Republican proposal to increase VA medical spending by \$1.7 billion to an unprecedented \$19 billion, some are calling for a still higher figure.

How much funding does the VA need?

What is the foundation for claims that VA administrators "need" more than \$19 billion to care for veterans?

How much could VA responsibly spend?

These are among the questions underlying a budget debate this year. Those calling for higher funding cite the recommendation of an "independent" budget developed by four veterans' organizations, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans,

AMVETS, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Although several veterans organizations fully support and applaud the proposed \$1.7 billion increase, the "Independent Budget" called for adding \$3 billion.

In past years, the "Independent Budget" has called for multi-billion dollar increases in VA medical care spending.

While Congress has often appropriated more than Presidents have proposed for veterans' medical care, it has never adopted increases of the magnitude proposed by the "Independent Budget".

This year, however, with widespread agreement that the cuts required under the President's budget would have devastating results for veterans, it became clear that a spending increase above \$1 billion would be needed.

Ironically, advocates who have been totally ineffectual in seeking major funding increases in the past are now unwilling to recognize that a 10 percent, \$1.7 billion, funding increase is reason to celebrate, not complain.

In calling late last year for a nearly \$3 billion increase in veterans' medical spending, however, the Independent Budget has escaped the close scrutiny given the Administration's budget.

But, just as the President's budget for VA medical spending is totally inadequate, the "independent" budget's is bloated.

Among its flaws, the Independent Budget: overstates by \$430 million (based on Congressional Budget Office estimates) the cost in FY 2000 of providing emergency care for veterans; overstates by up to \$450 million (based on estimates developed by the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and recently supported by VA experts) the cost of testing and treating veterans for Hepatitis C, a disease affecting VA patients at higher rates than the general population; and "double-counts", or spends twice (as a matter of "principle" rather than demonstrated need), projected medical care spending of \$555 million in collections from veterans' health insurers.

Adjusting the \$3 billion Independent Budget recommendations to eliminate what amounts to cost-padding yields essentially the same funding increase adopted in both the Congressional Budget Resolution and the pending House VA-HUD appropriations bill, an additional \$1.7 billion.

Ironically, as some are calling for still higher spending, editorial writers are questioning the need for any increased VA medical spending, given a GAO report suggesting that VA is wasting an estimated \$1 million daily operating unneeded hospital buildings.

The House Veterans' Affairs Committee just last month approved legislation to encourage VA to mount an "asset realignment process", as GAO recommends, to achieve needed mission changes.

GAO itself acknowledges that instituting such changes will take time.

Veterans' health care funding should not be shortchanged in the meantime.

The proposed \$1.7 billion increase (to a total medical care budget of \$19 billion) is both justified and unprecedented in scope.

It would: allow VA to open new outpatient clinics and treat record numbers of veterans, an estimated 3.6 million (200,000 more than in 1998); remove the threat of layoffs facing at least 8,500 VA health care workers and enable VA to lift hiring freezes on critical job vacancies at many facilities; permit expansion of long-term care services for aging veterans; provide funding for emergency care for veterans who lack any health care coverage; and fund the increased cost of testing and treatment of veterans at risk for Hepatitis C.

Given the projected impact of this record funding level, how does one account for the

rhetoric still voiced in support of higher spending?

Some veterans' groups have apparently taken the position that if \$1.7 billion in additional funding is good, then still more would be better.

In addition, some Members—ignoring the tradition of bipartisanship which has produced generous benefit programs for America's veterans—have seen the opportunity for partisan advantage in this budget debate.

Rather than helping ensure a record level of funding for veterans' needs, they are politicizing the issue through "bid-raising" and unfairly dragging veterans' organizations into a partisan dilemma.

House appropriators have worked hard to give veterans a record funding increase that meets in full the recommendations of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

It's time, though, that we match our earlier bipartisan criticism of the Administration's budget with bipartisan support for this unprecedented increase in veterans' health care spending.

Congress should adopt the \$1.7 billion increase needed to reinvigorate the VA health care system.

Members should also commit to working together to make sure that the Administration's next budget provides the funding necessary to give veterans the quality health care they expect and deserve.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there further amendments to the bill?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to conclude by suggesting that there are no further amendments. There is no further business before the body on this bill, other than the final amendment and the final passage vote.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the chairman for the way the Chair has conducted the debate today, and to all the staff who have worked so hard and put in all the hours to help us to get to this point, and to all the Members who participated in the debate.

This is the tip of the iceberg, what we see here today. With all the work that has gone into this on the part of our constituents and our staffs and the Members, I think it is a good product. I am proud of the fact that we have gotten this far.

I thank especially my colleague, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), the ranking member. I have learned a great deal from him through this process, not the least of which is about friendship, honor, and respect. I treasure that relationship and I thank him for his support along the way.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I very much appreciate the kind comments of the chairman. I want to compliment him on the way he has handled this bill from the very beginning of the year. He has done an excellent job, as I said at the beginning of my remarks. He is particularly capable and very responsive to the legitimate concerns of the minority. That certainly has been appreciated.

I also want to join the chairman in expressing appreciation both to the

majority and minority staffs, and certainly my permanent staff for the hard work they have done on this bill, without which it would be extremely difficult or actually impossible to move this legislation forward. Again, I appreciate the chairman's considerations.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. TANCREDO

The CHAIRMAN. The pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The Clerk designated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 366, noes 54, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 401]

AYES—366

Abercrombie	Coburn	Gonzalez
Ackerman	Collins	Goode
Aderholt	Combest	Goodlatte
Allen	Condit	Goodling
Andrews	Cook	Gordon
Archer	Costello	Goss
Army	Coyne	Graham
Bachus	Cramer	Granger
Baird	Crane	Green (TX)
Baker	Cubin	Green (WI)
Baldacci	Cummings	Greenwood
Baldwin	Cunningham	Gutierrez
Barcia	Danner	Gutknecht
Barr	Davis (FL)	Hall (OH)
Barrett (NE)	Davis (VA)	Hall (TX)
Barrett (WI)	Deal	Hansen
Bartlett	DeFazio	Hastings (WA)
Barton	DeGette	Hayes
Bass	DeLauro	Hayworth
Bateman	DeLay	Hefley
Becerra	DeMint	Herger
Bentsen	Deutsch	Hill (IN)
Bereuter	Diaz-Balart	Hill (MT)
Berkley	Dickey	Hilleary
Berry	Dicks	Hinchey
Biggert	Dingell	Hinojosa
Billakis	Doggett	Hoefel
Bishop	Doolittle	Hoekstra
Blagojevich	Doyle	Holden
Bliley	Dreier	Holt
Blumenauer	Duncan	Hooley
Blunt	Dunn	Horn
Boehner	Edwards	Hostettler
Bonilla	Ehrlich	Hoyer
Bono	Emerson	Hulshof
Boswell	Engel	Hunter
Boucher	English	Hutchinson
Boyd	Eshoo	Hyde
Brady (PA)	Etheridge	Inslee
Brady (TX)	Evans	Isakson
Brown (FL)	Everett	Istook
Brown (OH)	Ewing	Jackson-Lee
Bryant	Farr	(TX)
Burr	Fattah	Jefferson
Burton	Filner	Jenkins
Buyer	Fletcher	John
Callahan	Foley	Johnson (CT)
Calvert	Forbes	Johnson, Sam
Camp	Ford	Jones (NC)
Canady	Fossella	Kanjorski
Cannon	Fowler	Kaptur
Capps	Franks (NJ)	Kasich
Capuano	Frost	Kelly
Cardin	Galleghy	Kennedy
Carson	Ganske	Kildee
Castle	Gejdenson	Kind (WI)
Chabot	Gekas	King (NY)
Chambliss	Gephardt	Kingston
Chenoweth	Gibbons	Klecza
Clement	Gilchrest	Klink
Clyburn	Gillmor	Kolbe
Coble	Gilman	LaHood

Lampson	Ortiz	Sisisky
Lantos	Oxley	Skeen
Largent	Pallone	Skelton
Larson	Pascarell	Slaughter
LaTourette	Pastor	Smith (MI)
Lazio	Paul	Smith (NJ)
Leach	Payne	Smith (TX)
Levin	Pease	Smith (WA)
Lewis (GA)	Pelosi	Snyder
Lewis (KY)	Peterson (MN)	Souder
Linder	Peterson (PA)	Spence
Lipinski	Petri	Spratt
LoBiondo	Phelps	Stabenow
Lofgren	Pickering	Stearns
Lowe	Pickett	Stenholm
Lucas (KY)	Pitts	Strickland
Lucas (OK)	Pombo	Stupak
Luther	Pomeroy	Sweeney
Maloney (CT)	Porter	Talent
Maloney (NY)	Portman	Tancredo
Manzullo	Price (NC)	Tanner
Martinez	Quinn	Tauscher
Mascara	Radanovich	Tauzin
Matsui	Rahall	Taylor (MS)
McCarthy (MO)	Ramstad	Taylor (NC)
McCarthy (NY)	Regula	Terry
McCollum	Reyes	Thomas
McCrery	Reynolds	Thompson (CA)
McDermott	Riley	Thompson (MS)
McGovern	Rivers	Thornberry
McHugh	Rodriguez	Thune
McInnis	Roemer	Thurman
McIntosh	Rogers	Tiahrt
McIntyre	Rohrabacher	Tierney
McKeon	Ros-Lehtinen	Toomey
McNulty	Rothman	Trafficant
Meehan	Roukema	Turner
Meeks (NY)	Roybal-Allard	Udall (CO)
Menendez	Royce	Udall (NM)
Metcalf	Ryan (WI)	Upton
Mica	Ryun (KS)	Visclosky
Miller (FL)	Salmon	Vitter
Miller, Gary	Sanchez	Walden
Minge	Sanders	Wamp
Mink	Sandlin	Watkins
Moakley	Sanford	Watts (OK)
Moore	Sawyer	Weiner
Moran (KS)	Saxton	Weldon (FL)
Moran (VA)	Scarborough	Weller
Murtha	Schaffer	Wexler
Myrick	Sensenbrenner	Weygand
Nadler	Serrano	Whitfield
Napolitano	Sessions	Wicker
Neal	Shadegg	Wilson
Nethercutt	Shaw	Wise
Ney	Shays	Wolf
Northup	Sherwood	Woolsey
Norwood	Shimkus	Wu
Nussle	Shows	Wynn
Oberstar	Shuster	
Obey	Simpson	

NOES—54

Ballenger	Hobson	Ose
Berman	Jackson (IL)	Owens
Bilbray	Johnson, E. B.	Packard
Boehlert	Kilpatrick	Rush
Borski	Knollenberg	Sabo
Campbell	Kucinich	Schakowsky
Clay	Kuykendall	Scott
Clayton	LaFalce	Sherman
Conyers	Lee	Stark
Cox	Lewis (CA)	Stump
Davis (IL)	Markey	Velazquez
Delahunt	McKinney	Vento
Dixon	Meek (FL)	Walsh
Dooley	Millender-	Waters
Ehlers	McDonald	Watt (NC)
Frank (MA)	Miller, George	Waxman
Frelinghuysen	Mollohan	Young (FL)
Hastings (FL)	Morella	
Hilliard	Oliver	

NOT VOTING—13

Bonior	Latham	Towns
Cooksey	Pryce (OH)	Weldon (PA)
Crowley	Rangel	Young (AK)
Houghton	Rogan	
Jones (OH)	Sununu	

□ 1811

Messrs. COX, DELAHUNT and SHERMAN and Ms. MCKINNEY changed their vote from "aye" to "no".

Messrs. HILL of Indiana, PETERSON of Pennsylvania, GARY MILLER of California, and NADLER and Ms.

BROWN of Florida changed their vote from "no" to "aye".

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, on roll-call No. 401, had I been present, I would have vote "yes."

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read the last 3 lines of the bill.

The Clerk read as follows:

This Act may be cited as the "Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 2000".

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2684, the fiscal year 2000 VA-HUD-Independent agencies appropriations bill.

American's students and America's Members of Congress just returned from summer vacation refreshed and renewed and ready to hit the books. Unfortunately in the first week back in class, the House is ready to earn its first grade of F.

If we look at the details of the VA-HUD report card, we can see how bad this bill is.

This bill gets an F for housing programs. It cuts community development block grants (CDBG) by \$250 million. These funds are critical in addressing local housing priorities. I'm usually skeptical of block grants, but here is one that has worked wonders to empower local communities to address critical housing needs. We need more CDBG funds, not less.

The bill also fails to provide sufficient funds for section 8 vouchers. Although funding increases slightly, there is a desperate need for new vouchers to provide more Americans with the help they need to house their families.

Not only will new families fail to get additional help in paying for housing, homeless families will see \$970 million less in homeless assistance grants.

The bill gets an F for science funding. It cuts National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA) funding by over \$1 billion. Since the space shuttle and International Space Station take up the majority of funding, these cuts fall disproportionately on science, aeronautics and technology. The bill also cuts \$24 million in National Science Foundation (NSF) funding, and fails to include the administration's proposed increase of \$245 million. These cuts to basic science research are shortsighted and ill-advised. Our nation's investment in basic research and technology has driven our economic development. This will be even more true in the future, unless we continue to cut these funds, as this bill does. The NSF and NASA have been incredibly valuable and successful and need more support, not less.

This bill gets an F for environmental protection. It cuts the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by \$278 million from fiscal year 1999. It cuts environmental research by \$15 million. It cuts clean water and air funding, so critical for protecting our nation's resources for future generations, by \$208 million. We know that once a natural resource is destroyed, it is expensive, or impossible, to recover. We must invest today, for a clean environment tomorrow. It is just that simple.

The bill gets an F for community service. It eliminates funding for the AmeriCorps program which encourages young people to become involved in their communities. AmeriCorps has

been incredibly successful in providing financial assistance to allow young people to engage in community service all over our nation. More than 100,000 AmeriCorps volunteers have helped to address crime, poverty, and illiteracy. AmeriCorps members have taught, tutored or mentored 2.6 million children, rehabilitated 25,000 homes, immunized 419,000 people, and helped 2.4 million homeless people. This is a program that works.

The bill gets a C— for veterans benefits. This is the only passing grade since keeping our commitment to our veterans was prioritized in this bill. The \$1.5 billion increase over last year's appropriations is a good step forward in fulfilling our promises to our veterans. But it is not enough. Our veterans are worried and frustrated, and they have every right to be. The VA health care system desperately needs more funding to provide adequate medical care to our nation's veterans, who have earned it. For too long this Congress has failed to adequately fund veteran's program and benefits, and now the situation is a crisis. Congress must do better for our veterans.

Final grade: F. This bill is a failure. If University of Wisconsin students earned this type of report card, they'd have to retake the test. And that's exactly what the Congress is going to have to do, if this bill passes.

We can do better, and we must do better. This bill falls far short of the needs of our great nation. To shortchange our citizens while we increase defense spending is not the way a great nation ought to behave. I look forward to a day later this year when I can vote for a VA-HUD appropriations bill that can earn a passing grade, or maybe even an A. Today, I must give it the grade it deserves and vote "no."

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to voice my opposition to the fiscal year 2000 VA/HUD appropriations act. While I congratulate the committee and subcommittee chairmen on their efforts to add some funding for veterans medical care, and in particular, language to continue a demonstration project in east central Florida which allows the VA to contract with local hospitals to provide inpatient care to veterans, I simply cannot support a bill that does not provide adequate increased funding for our nation's veterans, decimates the NASA program, and terminates the Selective Service Agency.

I was pleased to see the Hinchey amendment, which would have prohibited the VA from using funds to implement or administer the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) system, was defeated. VERA is intended to provide for and equitable distribution of funds for medical care. As a representative from a state that has seen a tremendous increase in the number of veterans seeking care, I can attest to the need for a system that has the dollars follow the veterans. Although the bill would increase funding for veterans, there will be a continued significant shortfall in funding for VA health care and many services are still in danger. According to the Independent Budget presented by AMVETS, the Disabled American Veterans, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, this increase is \$1.3 billion less than what is needed to adequately address the health-care needs of our nation's veterans. We cannot penalize our veterans for the sacrifices they have made by de-

nying them adequate health care. I am committed to working for increased veterans funding, and ensuring that they have the health care they deserve.

NASA has worked very hard to increase efficiency and downsize their programs, while receiving reductions in their budget. Over the past 6 years, they have saved approximately \$35 billion relative to earlier outyear estimates, while at the same time increasing productivity. However, the Committee's actions this year cuts \$1 billion from fiscal year 1999 levels. This will result in a loss of critical capabilities that are essential to the United States' leadership in space. To quote NASA Administrator Dan Goldin, "the reductions would severely damage the technology base built over the last five years; NASA's ability to further reduce costs and increase scientific productivity would end. It could also result in the closure of NASA Centers, and the elimination, through forced separations, of unique and critical technical skills uniquely possessed by NASA."

Mr. Chairman, we're not talking about a program that can continue to safely operate after sustaining this type of cut. I've heard from my constituents of the long hours and extra efforts that NASA employees have contributed to keep our space program operating safely. We cannot expect this dedication if we do not give them the funds that they need. For example, the reduction to Mission Support will wipe out NASA plans to correct critical facility safety deficiencies. This is simply unacceptable.

The space program has a tremendous impact on the State of Florida. In the my district alone, NASA has granted awards estimated at over \$6 million over the past year. These contracts have gone to local businesses, the University of Central Florida and Valencia Community College. These partnerships have not only provided students with valuable experience, they have provided growth opportunities for small businesses. If we enact this bill, the cuts to NASA will reverberate throughout the community.

Additionally, the termination of the Selective Service Agency is shortsighted and could risk our national security. I voted for the Cunningham amendment to restore funding for this program, which unfortunately failed. This year, every military service except for the Marine Corps, is faced with recruiting and retention problems. And it does not appear as though this problem will end. Should we be faced with a crisis that would require a return to the draft, it would take more than a year to reconstitute the Selective Service System. This is entirely too much time in the event of a crisis. I cannot support the termination of this important system.

Mr. Chairman, again, I appreciate the efforts by the committee to provide an increase for VA medical care and would like to support this bill. But given the tremendous reductions and inadequate funding levels, I simply cannot vote for this bill. I will work hard to see these deficiencies are corrected in conference.

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Chairman, the House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on the fiscal year 2000 VA-HUD spending bill. Included in this bill is funding for veterans, housing, NASA, and the EPA. While there is an increase in funding for veterans healthcare, I am disappointed that the funding amount is short of the \$3 billion requested in the Independent Budget, which was developed by AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Vet-

erans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

As a member on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I have sat through testimony about the President's budget, I have sat through testimony about the state of the VA healthcare system, and I have heard about VA's plans to lay off employees. Needles to say, this has not been an encouraging year with regard to veterans healthcare. In my district alone, there are over 55,000 veterans. If funding is not available, my veterans will suffer the consequences. And now, at the end of the fiscal year, I am faced with a choice of voting for a \$1.7 billion increase in funding or voting against funding in the hopes that \$3 billion will be added. The smaller figure is insufficient, but a step in the right direction. I intend to vote for this bill, but I am disappointed that we are not able to amend this bill so that I could vote for adequate funding for veterans.

Our veterans have served our country well. They don't deserve to go through the annual budget process with the uncertainty that exists. The veterans groups that comprise the Independent Budget are not far off the mark when they state in the introduction of the Independent Budget for fiscal year 2000:

Veterans' programs, once secure expressions of a Nation's gratitude, are now only line items on the debit side of the government's ledger—items routinely targeted for cutting in the name of fiscal restraint.

We have to stop cheating our veterans.

I will encourage the President to submit a better budget next year. And as I did this year, I will work with my colleagues on the committee to increase funding for veterans healthcare to the amount requested in the Independent Budget.

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, providing for veterans and their families is one of my highest priorities in Congress. The men and women who served in the armed services deserve the gratitude of the entire Nation. But rather than fulfilling our obligations to veterans and ensuring the continuation of benefits and the improvement of veterans' health care, we are letting veterans down. H.R. 2684 fails our veterans. This bill provides \$1.5 billion more than fiscal year 1999 funding, and \$1.6 billion more than requested by the president—but this is not enough.

The Independent Budget, published by Paralyzed Veterans of Americans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans and AMVETS, demands a budget increase of \$3 billion for fiscal year 2000. This is the necessary amount to provide the health care and other services that veterans deserve.

I have met with many Kansas veterans and heard accounts of substandard health care and loss of benefits. Not only are we eliminating treatment, we are rationing the health care we do provide. Veterans have shared their frustration with the state of veterans' health care, describing accounts of VA hospitals delaying and denying services.

These men and women sacrificed for our country. They were willing to give their lives to protect the principles of our Nation. But instead of honoring and providing for our veterans, we are denying them the services they



desperately need. I cannot support this appropriations legislation as it does not fulfill our obligation to our veterans. We cannot let veterans down in their time of need. We must address the alarming state of the VA health care system. We must improve the quality of veterans' health care. We must guarantee the continuation of services. We must not fail our veterans.

In addition, this bill critically underfunds vital HUD programs, including the HOME program and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which has helped state and local governments revitalize neighborhoods, expand affordable housing and economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services for twenty-five years.

I am proud to represent Kansas City, Kansas, a community that is a leader in developing useful and visionary ideas in the use of CDBG grants to rehabilitate existing housing stock and build new housing. I recently spoke to the mayor of Kansas City, Carol Marinovich, who told me that CDBG and HOME grants are the backbone of improvement efforts in Kansas City, from Peregrine Falcon Development that is building 68 single family homes in former vacant lots to Argentine Recreation Center that was built with a \$1 million CDBG grant, providing a center of community to this mixed-income, minority neighborhood. These vital programs, like Section 8 housing assistance, public housing capital assistance, drug elimination grants, homeless programs, fair housing activities, Brownfields cleanup, and housing for persons with AIDS represent a commitment to our communities that this bill does not recognize.

This appropriation cuts the National Science Foundation (NSF) by \$274 million, which would undermine the Nation's investment in discovery and education, specifically in the institutions of higher learning in eastern Kansas, which has fueled unprecedented economic growth for the past decade. The funding cut from the NASA science programs jeopardizes U.S. leadership in space and has the potential to decrease research in our colleges as well as close NASA Centers.

My final concern with this bill is its failure to meet Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funding levels of 1999, which could lead to excess emissions of as much as 12,000 tons of ozone depleting substances. This would result in a depleted ozone layer and increased cases of skin cancers and cataracts.

For these reasons, I am voting against final passage of H.R. 2684.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2684, the fiscal year 2000 VA/HUD and independent agencies appropriations bill. In July of this year, the House Appropriations Committee completed a "mark-up" of the VA/HUD bill rendering deep cuts in funding for veterans, housing and NASA. The overall cuts in these programs will hurt our nation's ability to provide safe, affordable housing, economic opportunities, and health care for veterans. These cuts will also devastate NASA and the Nation's preeminence in space science and exploration. Because of these unacceptable cuts, I voted against this bill in the Appropriations Committee and I will continue to vote against this bill.

If this bill passes, the \$1.6 billion in HUD cuts alone will have a devastating impact on families and communities nationwide. Overall,

the HUD cuts represent: an estimated 156,000 fewer housing units for low-income families in America at a time when worst case housing needs are at an all-time high; 16,000 homeless families and persons with AIDS who will not receive vital housing and related services; and 97,000 jobs that will not be generated in communities that need them.

The potential impact of the HUD budget cuts on the 15th Congressional District of Michigan, which I represent, are dismal and economic development activity under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program will be cut by \$250 million from the level enacted in 1999, and \$5 million will be cut from the job-generating Brownfields Economic Development Initiative. This means that approximately 97,000 jobs that could be created by these programs will not be. These cuts will impact the creation of approximately 191 jobs in my district. Mr. Speaker there are several communities that still struggle in the slow lane of the Nation's strong economy. The 15th Congressional District of Michigan cannot afford to lose one potential job, nor can it afford to lose the \$1,385,000 total it will lose if this bill passes.

Despite a booming economy, the number of families with worst case housing needs (defined as paying over 50 percent of their income on rent) remains at an all-time high of 12.5 million people, including 4.5 million children, 1.5 million elderly, and 3.5 million persons in families on welfare. The cuts in this bill will result in a total of over 128,000 families being denied housing vouchers. 88 of the families being denied housing vouchers as a result of this bill are from my district. We should be expanding rather than cutting the supply of affordable housing for all Americans. If we do not take care of our nation's most vulnerable citizens during economic plenty, when will we open doors for all Americans?

Although the bill increases funding for veterans health care by \$1.7 billion, the funding is short of the approximately \$3 billion, advocated by most of the major veterans organizations, that is needed to keep pace with the health care needs of veterans. Representative LANE EVANS, ranking Democratic member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, has indicated that he is also in opposition to this bill because of this funding shortfall.

The bill slashes funding for key NASA science programs. It cuts the request for the National Science Foundation (NSF) by \$274 million which will eliminate funding for almost 14,000 researchers and science and mathematics educators. The reduction alone will undermine the Nation's investment in discovery and education which has fueled unprecedented economic growth for the past decade.

The bill cuts the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Operating Program and will result in personnel reductions that will hamper efforts to protect public health and the environment, and prevent the EPA from undertaking initiatives designed to improve the quality of the Nation's air, water, and food supply. The bill also cuts \$50 million each from the request for the Superfund program and for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program.

Mr. Chairman, I believe these budget cuts will move America in exactly the wrong direction. In this era of unprecedented economic prosperity we should be expanding, not cutting programs that meet our vital needs of housing, economic opportunity, health care for vet-

erans, and our preeminence in space science and exploration.

For these reasons, I vote "no" on the VA-HUD appropriations bill.

Mr. LAFALCE. MR. CHAIRMAN, I RISE IN OPPOSITION TO THE VA-HUD APPROPRIATIONS BILL.

First, I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of Subcommittee Chairman WALSH and Ranking Member MOLLOHAN. They have done the best job they could with an inadequate funding allocation.

Yet, as a result of these funding limits, the bill is bad for housing. It reflects a combination of opportunities missed and promises unkept.

There are 5.3 million families—over 12 million Americans—with worst case housing needs. This includes some 1.5 million elderly and 4.5 million children. Last year, as part of this same VA-HUD bill, Congress authorized 100,000 new affordable housing vouchers for fiscal year 2000, to address this need. Yet, today's bill does not fund a single new voucher.

On any given night, there are almost three quarters of a million homeless Americans. Yet, this bill actually cuts funding for homeless prevention programs—leaving us some \$150 million below the funding level of five years ago.

Last year, we enacted historic legislation to reform public housing. Yet, today's bill undercuts that reform effort, by cutting public housing capital repair funds by \$500 million, and leaving housing agencies hundreds of millions of dollars short of even covering operating costs.

Overall, virtually every housing program has been cut in this bill—including housing counseling, fair housing enforcement, the HOME program, rural housing, lead paint reduction, and others.

Finally, this bill is inadequate when it comes to economic development. At a time of general economic prosperity, we should be acting to ensure that all communities and all Americans have the opportunity to participate in that prosperity.

Yet, instead of approving the Administration's APIC initiative to leverage billions of dollars in investments in distressed communities, this bill cuts CDBG by \$250 million, and also cuts funding for brownfields redevelopment, empowerment zones, and enterprise communities.

We should reject this bill unless funding is restored for these critical programs.

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Chairman: I rise to thank my colleague from New York, Mr. WALSH, for including language in his committee report on this legislation recommending that EPA investigate and promote opportunities for the reuse of industrial packages. I hope that during the conference on the VA, HUD bill, Chairman WALSH will see fit to earmark some modest amount of money for this program, for which there is ample authority under existing law. I am placing in the RECORD my letter to the chairman of the subcommittee in further support of this request.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,  
Washington, DC, September 8, 1999.

Hon. JAMES T. WALSH,  
Chairman, Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and  
Independent Agencies, Washington, DC.

DEAR JIM: Thank you for including report language in the committee report accompanying H.R. 2684, the FY 2000 appropriations bill for VA, HUD and Independent Agencies, that directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to investigate and promote

opportunities for the reuse of industrial packages in order to increase waste reduction and energy efficiency.

Although I appreciate the fiscal constraints that your subcommittee is under, I hope that in conference on this bill you could add report language providing for a lien item set-aside directing EPA to provide "\$1,000,000 to increase waste reduction and energy efficiency through the expanded reuse of industrial packages." As Chairman of the Commerce Committee, I recognize the environmental benefits to be derived from reusing industrial packages.

Thank you for your support on this issue and your consideration of this specific request. Please contact me with any questions or have your staff call Jim Barnette at 225-2927.

Sincerely,

TOM BILEY,  
Chairman.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2684, the VA-HUD, and independent agencies fiscal year 2000 appropriations bill. I do so because the bill would drastically cut our efforts to provide the best care to our nation's veterans and the best protection for our environment. But I would like to focus today on the devastation this bill would cause in public housing and urban development programs in our country, and in my congressional district.

We are in the midst of an unprecedented economic boom in our country which is largely the result of the fiscal discipline exerted in Congress when the 1990 and 1993 budget deals were passed. That discipline has produced an era where we now have surplus projections for the next decade and beyond. In this time of unparalleled growth and opportunity, we have a special duty to protect those vulnerable citizens who depend on the federal government for housing assistance.

Worst case housing needs are at an all time high of 5.3 million households today. In my district, a number of owners are considering opting out of the Section 8 program to cash in on the hot real estate market in eastern Massachusetts. Hundreds of seniors living in the communities that I represent are frightened because they have received notices that their landlords are contemplating the termination of their contracts with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Without the money to make fair and reasonable offers to these owners, and to increase the number of elderly assistance housing vouchers, HUD is unable—though not unwilling—to protect these seniors in my district and throughout the country.

In the face of these challenges, what does the Republican majority propose to do for these seniors: nothing. Instead, the majority has proposed a HUD budget that falls \$1.6 billion short of last year's level. The bill will not fund a single Administration request for new housing and economic development assistance, which includes the funding of 100,000 new Section 8 vouchers. And the cuts will have a very deep and negative impact in my district—this bill will cut nearly \$4 million, 250 fewer jobs, and 440 fewer housing units for low-income families.

At the same time, the cuts will cripple the ability of HUD to assist worthy community development projects in cities and towns in every district. In my district, HUD is an active participant in the redevelopment efforts of the cities of Everett, Malden, and Medford—three older,

industrial cities that have joined forces to transform themselves from industrial-age communities to information-age communities with the creation of a telecommunications research and development technology park called TelCom City. HUD recently announced a grant and loan guarantee package for the TeleCom City project to assist these 3 cities to reclaim some of the land at the site that is considered "brownfields." This type of assistance is playing a critical role in the revitalization of these communities.

Mr. Chairman, these cuts are too deep. The Republican leadership should be ashamed to be proposing to dole out huge tax breaks to the wealthy financed on the backs of the most vulnerable citizens in our country—those who depend on housing assistance to keep a roof over their heads, and those living in cities and towns that need a helping hand to achieve their redevelopment goals. I urge a no vote on this bill.

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Chairman, I want to pose the same question to my colleagues in the House that I asked a group of veterans in Hoke County, North Carolina.

Name this Country: 1,500,000 active service personnel, 10 standing Army divisions, 20 Air Force and Navy air wings, 2000 combat aircraft, 232 strategic bombers, 13 strategic missile submarines, 232 missiles, 500 ICBMs with 1950 warheads, 4 aircraft carriers, and 121 associated combat ships and submarines.

The audience of VFW veterans, many of them retired military service men and women, had difficulty guessing what country I was talking about. I heard a number of responses—North Korea, Russia, Iraq, and finally someone guessed correctly—the United States.

That is where this nation stands in terms of military strength. That is where we are since 1992 when a liberal president took over our military. The systematic degradation of our armed forces is a disgrace to the men and women who have fought for our country, to our fallen comrades, and to our veterans who stand witness to the dismantling of the military and the VA services they were promised when they entered the military.

I have received letters, phone calls and personal visits, recounting horror stories of the services that veterans get from VA hospitals and medical clinics. Veterans' Administration officials report that an average wait for patients who need to see a specialist is almost 4 months—120 days! They hope to see this waiting period reduced to what they claim an acceptable level—30 days.

I don't know about you, but when I am in pain—I want to do something about it now—not in 30 days and certainly not in 120 days.

Our system is in need of drastic improvements. That is a fact. But cutting funding to the VA and its health care services while the veterans population grows is hurting the men and women who have served our country. You cannot continue to add users of VA services without increasing providers of the health care service. It's simple mathematics.

I commend my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee for producing legislation under the tightest of budgetary constraints that demonstrates this Congress' commitment to our nation's veterans. Specifically, I applaud the efforts of committee members to ensure that this bill provides \$1.6 billion in additional funding over the insufficient amount requested in the President's budget.

I urge my colleagues to support our veterans by supporting this bill. I am committed to working with other members of Congress to continue to improve upon the services the Veterans' Administration provide in North Carolina and around the country.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Chairman, I rise to express my strongest opposition to H.R. 2684, the VA-HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations bill. As we approach the final stretch of the appropriations process, I would like to be able to support this legislation, which is one of our largest domestic funding bills. Regrettably, I cannot.

In spite of the hard work of my colleagues, Chairman JAMES WALSH and Ranking Member ALAN MOLLOHAN, who did their best under difficult budgetary constraints, this bill makes unacceptable cuts to essential housing, science, space, environmental, and veteran programs.

For example, this bill funds the Department of Housing and Urban Development at \$26.1 billion—nearly \$2 billion below the administration's request. This translates into cuts in all of HUD's major programs including the Community Development Block Grant program, HOME program, public housing capital assistance, drug elimination grants, homeless programs, fair housing activities, Brownfields cleanup and development, lead-based paint abatement and housing for persons with AIDS.

The residents of L.A. County, where housing demand is more than three times higher than the rest of the nation and rents are at record levels, will be devastated. I have received dozens of letters from service and housing providers in Los Angeles decrying these proposed cuts. They state over and over again that these cuts will severely undermine their ability to serve our homeless veterans and working families.

For example, Los Angeles County's average apartment rent is a startling \$982 a month, 19% higher than the national average. This June, Southern California's median home price hit an all-time high of \$204,000. These trends are troubling for a number of reasons:

Rising rents means our working families will be forced to double or triple-up, leading to severe overcrowding. In fact, the LA Housing Department estimates that 25% of poor renters already live in overcrowded conditions, many of them having 7 or more people sharing a two-bedroom apartment.

Rising rents also means that many families will be forced to seek cheaper housing inland, leading to longer commutes, more freeway congestion, and more smog.

Rising rents is also bad for business, as it makes it more difficult for growing companies to attract workers, making them less competitive and forcing them to leave the area.

Furthermore, this bill makes unacceptable cuts to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, better known as NASA. The bill butchers NASA's budget by a whopping \$1 billion—a 7% cut from last year's level. Programs facing the Republican scalpel include basic research in astronomy, earth science and space science. NASA Administrator Dan Goldin has stated that these cuts will decimate key elements of the nation's space program, requiring the largest restructuring since the end of the Apollo program.

This bill's cuts to NASA will effectively decimate the nation's future space science program, making substantial reductions in the Explorer programs, the Discovery program and

Supporting Research and Technology, all mainstays of university research. Upcoming missions managed by scientists at the University of California campuses will also be impacted, including the Mars Polar Lander mission at UCLA, Extreme Ultraviolet Explorer Observatory at UC Berkeley, and the Triana Satellite at UC San Diego.

The bill also reduces the National Science Foundation's budget by \$24 million from last year's level and \$275 million less than requested by the Administration. NSF supports basic research that's fundamentally important to all aspects of our lives, from basic biological research to information technology. At a time when we are grappling with the need to improve our schoolchildren's math and science skills, this cut will deprive thousands of teachers the training they need in these very fields.

Basic research is also vital to maintaining this nation's preeminence in science and space exploration into the next century. Our California universities in particular are extremely concerned about the impact of these reductions on university-based research. California receives over 10% of all National Science Foundation's research grants and these cuts will limit the number of grants to promising new researchers to dangerously low levels.

To add insult to injury, Republicans at the last minute restored \$400 million to NASA's budget, but at the expense of the AmeriCorps national service program. This cut to AmeriCorps' budget essentially terminates the highly successful domestic Peace Corps. AmeriCorps members—tackling critical problems like illiteracy, crime and poverty—have served nearly 33 million people in more than 4,000 communities. Promoting the American ideals of community involvement, national service and civic participation, AmeriCorps members have taught, tutored or mentored more than 2.6 million children, served 564,000 at-risk youth in after-school programs, operated 40,500 safety patrols, rehabilitated 25,000 homes, aided more than 2.4 million homeless individuals and immunized 419,000 people. Cutting this highly successful program is unacceptable.

Lastly, this bill underfunds medical care for our deserving veterans. Veterans are telling us that this bill is still \$1.3 billion below what the Veterans' Administration needs just to maintain current services. While the Appropriations Committee added \$700 million to the VA account, they rejected an attempt to restore even more funding. My colleague from Texas, Representative CHET EDWARDS, offered an amendment to increase veterans health care spending by an additional \$730 million. Mindful of the need to be fiscally responsible, Mr. EDWARDS proposed to pay for this increase by delaying the proposed cut in the capital gains tax, which is one of the prized goodies included in Republican leadership's tax bill. This amendment failed on a party line vote, reaffirming that Republicans prefer to hand out benefits to the rich than provide health care benefits for veterans.

I have no choice but to oppose this draconian bill and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to express my appreciation of the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) leadership in fighting the rising hepatitis C (HCV) epidemic among veterans. It is my view that the

VA, Congress, community health leaders, and veterans' service organizations must do even more to ensure that veterans have access to the testing and treatment they deserve.

Today, nearly four million Americans have HCV. But the infection rate among veterans is as much as six times higher than in the general population according to the American Liver Foundation. Recent testing efforts within the VA indicate that nationally 8–10 percent of veterans are HCV positive and in some urban areas it is double that rate.

Alarming as these numbers are, the situation in the Hispanic community is especially serious. In our community, the infection rate approaches six percent among those in their late forties and early fifties and I am concerned that among Hispanic veterans the rate could be even higher. I am particularly concerned that we are seeing the beginning of what will be a steadily increasing number of Vietnam era veterans who test positive for this disease. Nearly one million Hispanic Americans are veterans of military service, several hundred thousand of whom served during the Vietnam era.

Unfortunately, HCV is a silent killer. The disease progresses slowly without symptoms in a majority of patients for two decades or more. Patients with chronic NCV have significantly lower health-related quality of life than healthy individuals. But let there be no mistake about the serious nature of this disease. Untreated, HCV leads to liver failure, cancer, and death. It is now the leading cause of liver transplantation—a procedure that costs upwards of \$250,000 if an organ is even available for the patient.

I would like to have seen more funds directed toward veterans' healthcare and I strongly urge the VA to take all necessary steps to ensure that at the local level, every veteran who needs testing and treatment for HCV is able to get it. I applaud the efforts of veterans service organizations and local community health leaders to inform the at-risk members of our communities about the dangers of HCV. I look forward to working with each of these groups in the effort to halt the spread of this epidemic.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Chairman, I rise to register my deep concern about funding levels in this bill.

Our colleagues have already spoken about how deficiencies in funding for Housing and Urban Development programs would have a devastating impact on families and communities nationwide. Overall, the cuts represent an estimated 156,000 fewer housing units for low-income families in America at a time when worst-case housing needs are at an all-time high. Colorado's HUD funds would be cut by \$16.56 million, and my district in Colorado would see cuts in HUD programs of \$2.58 million from this year's levels. There are still so many Americans who aren't benefiting from our country's unprecedented national prosperity. As Secretary Cuomo has said, "Now is the time to invest in a brighter future for people and places left behind."

Some of my colleagues are seeking to boost the budgets of housing and veterans programs by taking funds from NASA, NSF, and other worthwhile science programs. I don't think this is the answer.

In fact, there is no point in trying to shift funds around when the real problem is a severely underfunded bill. The right way to fix

this bill is to start over. There is simply no fat to cut from this bill, especially where NASA is concerned.

The cuts made to NASA's budget in the fiscal year 2000 VA–HUD Appropriations bill represent the largest cut to the agency since the end of the Apollo program. Not everything was cut—academic programs, for instance, were increased 6 percent over fiscal year 1999 levels. In particular, the budget for the Space Grant program, which works through the Colorado Space Grant Consortium in my district, was increased to FY99 levels, enabling 15 colleges and universities and thousands of K–12 students throughout Colorado to continue to work together on the Citizen Explorer Satellite.

Overall, however, the bill cuts NASA's funding by \$1 billion from this year's levels. Space science programs—which fund the planetary missions, space-based observatories and other spacecraft, as well as research grants to universities and other institutions—have been cut \$163 million from this year's levels. These cuts endanger current and future NASA projects like Chandra, which recently sent images of exploding stars and black holes back to earth. Chandra's science instruments and the camera that took these photos are housed in a science instrument module built by Ball Aerospace, based in Boulder, CO.

This bill would also cut NASA funding to space and earth science programs at the University of Colorado. Important NASA-funded programs at CU's Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics, the Center for Astrodynamics Research, and the Center for the Study of Earth from Space, among others, would all see deep cuts under this bill.

This bill also cuts funding for the National Science Foundation by \$24 million below fiscal year 1999 levels. As the only agency with the responsibility of supporting research and education in all science and engineering disciplines, NSF funds many important programs. NSF funding represents 67 percent of the overall budget of the world-renowned National Center for Atmospheric Research, based in Boulder. At flat funding for fiscal year 2000, NCAR will receive, in real dollars, an approximate 4-percent cut.

Over the last few weeks, I have received hundreds of letters and calls from Coloradans in my district expressing concern, shock, even outrage over the cuts to science programs in the VA–HUD bill.

Many of these calls and letters are from students, researchers, and employees who would see their work directly affected by cuts in NASA's budget. But many of the letters I have received are from citizens who have no direct interest in NASA's programs. To me, their voices are significant because they point to the fact that science and space are concerns to us all. They understand the importance of continuing our investment in science, technology, research, and learning.

NASA tells us that "it is entirely foreseeable that this budget will cut off opportunities for the engineers, technologists, and earth and space scientists of the future, losing a generation of researchers who would have taken space exploration and development of cutting-edge technologies into the next millennium." I think that about sums it up. We're living in a time of prosperity that has been brought on by technological advances, yet we're not willing to fund the very programs that represent the backbone of this growth and that will continue to fuel it.

Mr. Chairman, the answer isn't to rearrange funding within this bill to suit our various priorities. The answer is to go back to the drawing board and come up with a bill that makes sense. As it stands, this bill isn't up to the task, and I cannot support it.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 2684, the VA-HUD-independent agencies appropriations for fiscal year 2000.

The Republican leadership's fiscal year VA-HUD appropriation fails miserably to protect our nation's veterans. The Republican leadership should be ashamed to offer a bill which slashes funding for the men and women who fought for our freedom. This Republican-led Congress has flat-lined veterans funding for the last four years. As our veterans continue to age, they face more medical emergencies. Unless funding for veterans' health care is significantly increased, services will be cut and essential health care will be denied. If we pass this bill, the message we send to our veterans is that the sacrifices they made for our country are meaningless. Give our nation's veterans what they deserve.

Mr. Chairman, in these times of economic prosperity, our nation has a responsibility to provide adequate assistance to our most vulnerable citizens. This legislation should also be opposed for the devastating cuts that it makes to programs that protect the interests of senior, persons with disabilities, children and the poor. In my district alone over \$4,612,000 dollars will be lost as a result of cuts to HUD. This will result in the elimination of a least 215 jobs as well as 401 housing units for low-income families.

If we are to remain committed to the principles of welfare reform and economic development, we must recognize that massive cuts to transitional housing and the elimination of jobs works directly against these higher goals. If we are to consider ourselves advocates for our nation's children, we must know that a \$10 million cut to the Lead Hazard Control Grant program puts children's health directly at risk. If we are to confront the needs of persons with AIDS, we must realize that their successful medical treatment requires stable housing. It has often been said that you can tell a lot about a country by how they treat their most vulnerable citizens. I ask, what does this legislation say about the United States?

In addition, it is a travesty that this bill eliminates funding for the AmeriCorps program. This initiative has been a tremendous success in my district. Lower-income children have been given opportunities to work with mentors that they would not have had without this program. These children have been given a chance to learn from an early age how important a quality education is, and to learn lifelong learning skills that will help them become productive members of our society and afford to go to college.

Lastly, NASA and the National Science Foundation have made great strides over the years, and I am disappointed that important science initiatives have been drastically cut. I am concerned that a cut this large will destroy any chance of us becoming the world leader in space and technology endeavors.

I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose the VA-HUD appropriation bill for fiscal year 2000.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, my colleagues Mr. WALSH and Mr. MOLLOHAN and those on the Appropriations Subcommittee

have been given an impossible job given the BBA of 1997.

Had the entire budget process been more honest, we would not have the situation that we are in, today. Had the budget process been more honest, Congress probably could have passed this bill before the August district work period.

Instead we are here pitting the NASA scientists against the veterans, against the children who participate in AmeriCorp against the segment in our society who needs help with affordable housing so they are not on the streets homeless. All of these programs are worthy of our support and all contribute to help make our communities more livable.

Some would say that this process helps us set our priorities, others would say that this just shows who is more politically organized.

In reality it is probably a slight demonstration of both, but since this is a political arena it favors the politically organized. Is it any wonder that the federal government spends 14 times more on space exploration than in oceanic research? NASA's proposed budget is \$13.85 billion while the two agencies that do oceanic research NOS and NIPHS' budget combined is only \$930 million.

I believe Congress should tone down the political nature of budgeting and be in the business of making communities more livable. A livable community is one that is safe, economically secure and one that plans and helps to meet the needs of those less fortunate.

An undeniable part of a livable community is affordable housing. The federal government is key to helping people who cannot otherwise be housed and to assist families in transition from dependent to self-reliant.

At a time when the American economy is booming and the government for the first time in decades is not operating in the red, it makes no sense to cut money from public housing, when for this segment of our community, affordable housing becomes harder to find. But under the present political budget process, the money has to be cut.

In my district, the Housing Authority of Portland operates 2,800 units of public housing in 32 apartments and over 200 single-family sites.

Who are the people that live in our public housing? They are the poor, the elderly and younger people with various disabilities. They are the people who have families who are working hard to learn skills to work at jobs that pay more than minimum wage.

They are precisely the people we want to help even if they are the people who are not politically organized.

They are not the people who will be helped next year by the over three-quarter trillion dollar tax breaks even though many have a very heavy tax burden because so much of their income goes to payroll taxes and sales taxes.

They are the people who will be hurt this year by this bill, because the bill falls short, because the Congress in 1997 got pulled away from the real priorities of the American people.

The non-capital costs of operating those public housing units in Portland last year was paid for with \$5.5 million in tenant rents. Yes, tenant rents. This did not cover the costs of the units, an additional \$5.1 million was paid by the federal government to help with the operating costs.

There are U.S. citizens across this country who need this type of support. This type of

hand up. Without it, there will be 156,000 fewer housing units for low-income families.

It means our homeless population will probably increase by 16,000 people and people with AIDS won't get the help they need to get off the street. It means 97,000 jobs won't be generated for people coming off welfare.

If this bill passes with the present cuts in HUD of \$1.6 billion below last year's level, people in Portland will be faced with a 15 percent reduction in operating subsidy this year.

That means Portland could face a loss of \$4,670,000. We could lose 529 low income housing units for families.

Livable communities promote safe neighborhoods, economic security, and where there is a good partnership with private institutions and government at all levels to leave the community and the environment better than they found it.

Let's be honest with the American people. Let's not chop away at it each year leaving our elderly, disabled and young struggling families to fend for themselves. Let's not pit our veterans against our seniors or scientists.

An honest budget process will make our jobs easier. Housing shouldn't be a political issue. I think most folks agree that there will always be some people in our society that we will always have to help, and we know we should. For many others help now means the American Dream is achievable tomorrow. All segments of our community deserve our attention and help. This process needs to be changed to promote not just an honest discussion but a more fair and equitable budget.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of our country's space program. NASA's contributions to the science community are immeasurable, yet its funding is being cut nearly \$1 billion for FY 2000.

I am troubled by this cut in NASA's funding. For decades, the United States has been the preeminent leader in space exploration. We were the first to put a man on the moon; we have had a successful space shuttle program; we possess superb satellite technology; and we are about to lead the world in building an international space station. How can the United States continue to be the world leader in space without the proper funding?

The United States has made great strides in scientific research and development as a direct result from NASA programs. We have learned a great deal from our space endeavors, but there is still so much to be discovered.

Our space program has enabled us to view spectacular cosmic events at the far reaches of the universe. We have been able to witness the birth of stars, observe black holes, and map distant galaxies. The United States has also been able to make great strides in medical research through experiments conducted in space. Future experiments that NASA conducts in space might yield information leading to a cure for cancer or heart disease. The possibilities are endless, as long as NASA is fully funded.

NASA has also made important contributions to the United States armed forces with state-of-the-art technology allowing the U.S. to maintain military superiority over the world.

It is regrettable to see NASA's funding scaled back so drastically. The research that NASA conducts is invaluable to both earth and space sciences and its benefits are far reaching. It is imperative that NASA receives the

necessary funding to continue making progress in scientific research and development, space exploration, and universal observation.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to this VA-HUD appropriations bill.

Mr. Chairman, veterans hospital facilities around the country are faced with mounting budget shortfalls. Hospitals are being consolidated around the country, including Tennessee, due to a lack of sufficient funds. An insufficient budget means the same inadequate funding for health care, more reductions in full-time employees, and new initiatives without new funding to pay for them. Veterans are growing older and sicker each year. We are approaching a medical emergency. Unless the veteran health care system receives the kinds of increases in funding it needs, critical services will be cut, health care denied, facilities closed and dedicated employees out of work.

Mr. Chairman, quite simply, this pattern has to end. This situation is outrageous. Our veterans have served their country in the noblest of manners. It is now our obligation and duty to take care of them. And in order to do this, we simply need sufficient funding.

I spoke on this floor five months ago about the dire situation our veterans are facing. Despite my best efforts in both the Budget Committee and on this floor, our veterans were left without the increases in funding they so desperately need. In the meantime, this House has found the time to pass a fiscally irresponsible \$792 billion tax cut that disproportionately benefits the wealthiest members of our society. This ridiculous tax cut depletes the resources available to our veterans who have already given so much to their country. This is quite simply about priorities: does this House want to improve health care for our nation's veterans or do we want to provide disproportionate tax cuts to the wealthy?

Although H.R. 2684 increases veterans funding, it only goes part way. A broad coalition of veterans groups have called for larger increases, particularly for veterans' health care. An amendment offered by Mr. EDWARDS and ruled out of order by the Rules Committee would have restored some of this critically needed funding. I strongly believe that serving our veterans, who have already made sacrifices to serve our country, should be a top priority in this House. It deeply saddens me that it appears others in this body put a higher priority on giving the wealthiest of our country a break on their capital gains taxes.

It is my hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me in opposing this bill. Regardless of which side of the aisle you are on, it is simply wrong to deny our veterans the funding they so desperately need. I hope that we can all agree on the need to provide increased funding for our veterans. I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill and support efforts to increase veterans funding.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, what are our priorities if we cannot repay those to whom we owe so greatly?

Earlier this summer, against the wishes of the American people, the majority party in this House passed a trillion-dollar tax bill. It helped the rich, big business, and an array of special interests. It promised economic prosperity and a balanced budget. It promised to return budget surpluses that exist only on paper.

I voted against the tax plan for a number of reasons. It was and is my belief that before Congress passes massive tax cuts that benefit the vast majority of Americans in a very minor way, that we first save Social Security, Medicare, and other invaluable programs. We also pay down our national debt. Those should be our priorities and primary duties.

There is one additional duty we should have performed before we passed a massive tax cut. It is a duty to which we are honor bound. That duty, Mr. Chairman, is to provide quality health care to the 26 million living Americans who, at times of great peril to the Nation, risked their lives selflessly for our country. We must provide our veterans with the benefits they were promised and deserve.

Mr. Chairman, we must decide what kind of medical care delivery system best suits our nation's veterans. We must either provided the necessary funds—all of them—to provide quality health care services under our current system, or we must make a radical change to a new system that guarantees that our veterans have access to quality health care. I am willing to support either option so long as our veterans find it acceptable and receive deserved high-quality health care.

What I cannot support maintaining the unsatisfactory status quo or something worse. As a veteran and a Member proud to serve our veterans, I will not support perpetuating a mediocre veterans' health care system. That, Mr. Chairman, is precisely what this bill does. Once again, the President requested a funding level incapable of providing quality service. Once again, the Republican Congress has produced a budget and an appropriations bill that fails to meet the VA's and our veterans' needs.

Mr. Chairman, I listen again and again to veterans in Michigan's 16th District complain about the poor service at VA clinics, excessive waiting lines at hospitals, crumbling facilities, insufficient numbers of qualified medical personnel, and an inability to provide prosthetics, wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, hearing aids, eyeglasses, and other needs. The VA's ability to provide long-term care is still not solved. Funding requests filed a decade or more ago, like in Allen Park, Michigan, go unfulfilled. The VA will again be asked to further streamline bureaucracy, improve efficiency, and get a bigger bang for the buck. But inadequate funds will be made available.

Mr. Chairman, you know who loses if we pass this bill today and maintain the status quo. It is the veterans and the country they served.

Veterans, veterans' service organizations, and Members of Congress from both parties have continually insisted that if the VA is to maintain its current level of medical services, an additional \$3.2 billion would be needed in FY 2000. The bill before us provides less than half that needed amount. It puts a shin plaster on a cancer. At a time when our veterans' long-term care needs are greatest, it slashes funding to state extended care facilities, the one type of long-term care venture that has been of moderate success. It also fails to provide any funding for tobacco-related illnesses.

I also would like to note my displeasure at the party-line decision made by the Rules Committee. The action of the Rules Committee and the rule itself are a great disservice to our veterans. They prevent the House from having an honest debate on the Edwards-

Evans-Stabenow amendment, which would have provided an additional \$730 million veterans' medical care. To offset the cost of this meaningful piece of legislation, the Edwards amendment would have delayed the implementation of the proposed Republican cut in the capital tax by one year.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot support this bill, and I am ashamed that again this year Congress will fail in its task of providing quality medical care to our veterans. We all owe our veterans a debt of gratitude. It is time to pay our debt.

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the fiscal year 2000 VA, HUD, and independent agencies appropriations bill. This bill before us is a good bill which takes care of our nation's veterans, addresses critical housing needs, protects the environment, and invests in science and technology research. At the same time, this bill demonstrates to the American people that Congress has kept its commitment to balance the federal budget. Many tough decisions were made to ensure that the government lives within its means and Congress keeps its promise to the American people.

However, Mr. Chairman, despite these tough decisions, we have provided our veterans with a \$1.7 billion increase. This means veterans will receive the medical care they deserve through medical centers and facilities like community based outpatient clinics. Countless veterans in my district have spoken to me about how much they appreciate having a clinic in their community rather than having to drive two or more hours for outpatient care. I'm proud to say that Congress, not the President, is making sure more community clinics are opened for veterans across the country.

Mr. Chairman, this bill also meets the crucial housing needs of low income, senior, and disabled populations. Section 8 and section 202 programs have been fully funded. Additionally, this bill protects the environment by increasing money for state and local environmental programs. This money will not stay in Washington but will be distributed to important state revolving funds for the protection of our natural resources.

Also, I want to express my support for critical funding of research and technology programs. NASA is paving the way for aeronautics and space technology into the next century. Congress must continue to support this research in a fiscally responsible manner.

Finally, I would like to commend Chairman WALSH and Ranking Member MOLLOHAN for their leadership. They have done a fine job producing a responsible and fair bill and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, this Member rises today to express his support for H.R. 2684, the Veterans (VA), Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Independent Agencies appropriations bill for fiscal year 2000. First, this Member would like to thank the distinguished Chairman of the VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee (Mr. WALSH), the distinguished Ranking Minority Member (Mr. MOLLOHAN) and all members of the subcommittee for the important but difficult work they did under the tight budget caps imposed in 1997.

Once again, this subcommittee undoubtedly has struggled to complete the tough task of allocating limited resources among many deserving programs. As a member of the House Banking Committee, the committee with jurisdiction over Federal housing programs, this

Member is very interested in how funds are appropriated in this area. Although there are numerous deserving programs included in this funding bill, this Member would like to emphasize five points.

First, this Member, in particular, would like to comment favorably upon the treatment of some housing programs. Section 8, section 184, section 202, and section 811 programs probably were funded as adequately as we can under the budgetary restraints. In particular, this Member commends the \$6 million appropriation for the section 184 program, the American Indian Housing Loan Guarantee Program, which he authored. This seems to be a program with excellent potential which, this Member notes without appropriate modesty in recognizing the support received from many colleagues, is for the first time providing private mortgage fund resources for Indians on reservations through a Federal Government guarantee program for those Indian families who have in the past been otherwise unable to secure conventional financing due to the trust status of Indian reservation land.

Second, this Member applauds the subcommittee for reducing the duplicative efforts of the Federal Government in rural housing and economic development. After a funding level of \$32 million in fiscal year 1999 for rural housing and economic development efforts in HUD, the subcommittee appropriated no money in fiscal year 2000 for HUD's rural housing efforts. However, unfortunately, a set-aside of \$10 million is still allocated from CDBG for rural housing and economic development.

As a long-term advocate of rural housing during my tenure in the House, this Member nevertheless believes that we need to be careful of duplication and waste of financial resources in the efforts of the Federal Government's programs for rural housing and economic development. The United States Department of Agriculture, through their Rural Development offices, has housing and development staff located throughout each state. We do not need to hire new HUD "community builders" to duplicate their work as suggested by the administration.

Third, however, this Member would like to emphasize his concerns about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provisions in this Act. The CDBG Program is proposed to be cut from a funding level of \$4.750 billion in fiscal year 1999 to \$4.5 billion for fiscal year 2000, a reduction of \$250 million. This Member would like to certainly support the restoration of funds for CDBG to the fiscal year 1999 level in the conference committee. The CDBG program not only is valuable to the larger entitlement cities, it gives assistance to those communities under 50,000 through state administering agencies. It is a government program with minimal overhead and bureaucracy.

Moreover, the CDBG program has provided invaluable dollars to cities and rural communities for such things as affordable housing, public infrastructure, and economic development. Specifically in Nebraska, CDBG dollars have recently been used in rural counties to meet their recent hurry-up demand for the development of important comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances as a result of concerns over the placement of mega-sized hog production factories.

With regard to CDBG, this Member is pleased to commend the subcommittee on re-

ducing the overall set-asides by \$266.5 million as compared to last year. This Member has testified at the subcommittee level that the expenditure of the maximum amount of CDBG funds should be left to the allocation of the state and eligible entitlement governments as compared to selected set-aside programs.

Fourth, this Member would also express his opposition to the elimination of the funding for the AmeriCorps Program, as contemplated by this appropriations bill. The funding for the AmeriCorps Program should be restored in the conference committee.

Lastly, this Member is aware of HUD's concerns with the reduced level of this subcommittee's appropriation. However, it is important to note that overall Congress is providing more than \$26 billion for housing and community development across the country, an increase of \$2 billion from the fiscal year 1999 mark. Moreover, 18 new HUD program initiatives deserve a thorough review by the authorizing committees before they are launched. According to the General Accounting Office, HUD has requested more than \$700 million for these ambiguously defined, and in some cases-questionable, new initiatives. This Member definitely believes we place an emphasis on funding proven current programs instead of understanding a wide variety of new initiatives, many of which lend themselves to the use of discretion for political rewards.

Because of the necessity to fund important housing and community development programs and despite the reservations expressed, this Member would encourage his colleagues to support H.R. 2684, the VA, HUD, and independent agencies appropriations bill.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the chairman, the ranking member, and their staffs for all the hard work that they put into crafting this bill under what were very difficult circumstances. As a new member of the subcommittee, I appreciated the collegial and bipartisan manner in which the chairman managed the committee.

However, I think we all recognize that the initial allocations given to our subcommittee were wholly unrealistic. Because of this unreasonable allocation, the subcommittee has had to make deep cuts in several programs that if signed into law, would prove devastating. In particular, the bill we are debating today cuts NASA funding by \$1 billion, thereby endangering our nation's research and technological edge. It cuts vital HUD programs by \$1.6 billion below last year's levels. In addition, the bill does not include any of the administration's request for new housing and economic development assistance such as APIC (America's Private Investment Companies) that could substantially improve the quality of life in many of our communities.

For these and other reasons, Mr. Chairman, I must reluctantly oppose final passage of this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the efforts by the subcommittee to address some of these funding shortfalls by raising our initial allocation during the full committee markup of the bill. I am especially pleased that the full committee increased funding to NASA by \$400 million. However, much more needs to be done. While the increase of \$400 million to NASA is an improvement to the previous \$1.4 billion cut, the total funding for NASA remains intolerably low.

In addition, given the fact that this increase comes at the expense of the AmeriCorps program, it is a certainty that the President will veto the bill.

Mr. Chairman, it's sad that little more than one month after the 30th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing, we are debating such massive cuts to NASA.

Neil Armstrong's first step may have been one giant leap for mankind, but the step that we are about to take would be one giant leap backwards for America. NASA technology has been an engine for economic growth in America—creating jobs, building entirely new industries, and improving our standard of living.

This Nation's previous investment in NASA yielded a research and technology capability without peer.

NASA's research helps solve society's most difficult problems. Through the ground-breaking research of our NASA scientists, we have improved the health of an aging public, helped our military ensure our national security, and protected our environment without damaging our industries.

Mr. Chairman, let's talk about the harmful effects of the bill as it relates to NASAO Dan Goldin, the NASA Administrator, says these reductions will decimate key elements of the Nation's space program.

Mr. Goldin said that these cuts would force the closure of one of three NASA Centers, resulting in significant layoffs. These cuts will be felt by the families of the men and women who will lose their jobs as a result of this bill.

This kind of budget might even reduce the flight safety of future shuttle missions, and the loss of morale will cause NASA to lose some of its most talented people.

Mr. Chairman, NASA has come too far and worked too hard for us to allow this to happen. Since 1994, NASA has made more budgetary sacrifices than almost any other Federal agency. At the same time, NASA has increased its productivity and efficiency; delivering on Dan Goldin's promise of "faster, stronger, cheaper." These proposed cuts are not the way that Congress should reward the success of the American patriots at NASA who work every day in the Nation's interest. America looks to us to build on the progress that has been made, not to destroy the very foundation upon which it rests. NASA is an American treasure—unique in the history of the world—and we must fight to sustain it for our future.

In a period of unprecedented prosperity, we should be looking for ways to deepen our investments in scientific research, bringing new and substantial economic development to many of our nation's struggling communities, as well as providing adequate resources for our nation's veterans who have so patriotically served our country. Instead, this bill moves our nation in exactly the wrong direction by making deep cuts in many vital programs.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I regrettably must oppose the bill that is before us today and urge my colleagues to do the same. I look forward to working with the chairman and the ranking member to improve this bill as this process moves forward.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there further amendments to the bill? If not, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD) having assumed the chair, Mr. LATOURETTE, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State



of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2684) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, pursuant to House Resolution 275, he reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted by the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. OBEY. In its present form, Mr. Speaker, I certainly am.

□ 1815

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OBEY moves to recommit the bill, H.R. 2684 to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the bill back to the House promptly in a form that ensures compliance with the section 302(b) allocation using Congressional Budget Office scorekeeping conventions to avoid sequestration of billions of dollars in discretionary spending in vital federal programs including the national defense, the National Institutes of Health, veterans medical care, and education and environmental programs, among many others.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, this bill pretends to spend \$19 billion on veterans health care, \$3.6 billion on National Science Foundation, \$17.4 billion on housing, and \$7.3 billion on environmental protection. But to make this bill eligible for consideration on the House floor it contains a phony \$3 billion cut in the Tennessee Valley Authority that the congressional Budget Office and OMB both agree saves not one dime.

That means that, in the end, unless \$3 billion in real savings are found, the law requires every item in this and every other appropriation bill to be sequestered; or, in plain language, to be cut by \$3 billion. That would mean defense would be cut by \$1.5 billion, veterans would be cut below the amount in the bill, and science would be cut further below the amount in the bill.

This motion simply tells the committee to find a real \$3 billion offset rather than the phony TVA offset which is now contained in the bill. Un-

less the committee produces a real offset, we will cause real reductions in veterans health care, in health and education programs in the budget, in environment, in defense, in science and virtually every other function of the government.

Mr. Speaker, so far this year we have seen several bills which use CBO scoring, then we see one other bill which simply uses what is called directed scoring. In other words they order the scorekeeper to tell us how much money the bill will be estimated to spend, which hides almost \$10 billion. And we see other bills that pretend they meet the budget requirements by labeling items as emergency expenditures. This one is the most dangerous of them all because it actually will produce sequestration, or cuts in other programs, including the programs in this bill, of almost \$3 billion.

The way to avoid those unnecessary actions is to support this recommittal motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) opposed to the motion?

Mr. WALSH. I am, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. The Committee on the Budget has supported our 302(b) allocation and the provisions in the bill which kept us within that allocation. We do not believe, nor is there anything that would lead us to think, that there will be any sequestration of funds.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill. There is no good reason to recommit it to the committee. The committee has worked its will. The House is prepared to vote. This bill contains the largest-ever increase in veterans medical care. It has the support of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

Mr. Speaker, this bill strikes a delicate balance that keeps us within our allocation and it keeps us on track to produce a surplus that will benefit our country, helping us to save Social Security and Medicare, to reduce our debt, and to provide all American taxpayers with a well-deserved tax cut.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 207, noes 215, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 402]

AYES—207

Abercrombie	Gutierrez	Napolitano
Ackerman	Hall (OH)	Neal
Allen	Hall (TX)	Oberstar
Andrews	Hastings (FL)	Obey
Baird	Hill (IN)	Olver
Baldacci	Hilliard	Ortiz
Baldwin	Hinchee	Owens
Barcia	Hinojosa	Pallone
Barrett (WI)	Hoefel	Pascarell
Becerra	Holden	Pastor
Bentsen	Holt	Payne
Berkley	Hooley	Pelosi
Berman	Hoyer	Peterson (MN)
Berry	Inslee	Phelps
Bishop	Jackson (IL)	Pomeroy
Blagojevich	Jackson-Lee	Price (NC)
Blumenauer	(TX)	Rahall
Bonior	Jefferson	Reyes
Borski	John	Rivers
Boswell	Johnson, E. B.	Rodriguez
Boucher	Jones (OH)	Roemer
Boyd	Kanjorski	Rothman
Brady (PA)	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Brown (FL)	Kennedy	Rush
Brown (OH)	Kildee	Sabo
Capps	Kilpatrick	Sanchez
Capuano	Kind (WI)	Sanders
Cardin	Kleczka	Sandlin
Carson	Klink	Sawyer
Clay	Kucinich	Schakowsky
Clayton	LaFalce	Scott
Clement	Lampson	Serrano
Clyburn	Lantos	Sherman
Condit	Larson	Shows
Conyers	Lee	Sisisky
Costello	Levin	Skelton
Coyne	Lewis (GA)	Slaughter
Cramer	Lipinski	Smith (WA)
Cummings	Lofgren	Snyder
Danner	Lowe	Spratt
Davis (FL)	Lucas (KY)	Stabenow
Davis (IL)	Luther	Stark
DeFazio	Maloney (CT)	Stenholm
DeGette	Maloney (NY)	Strickland
Delahunt	Markey	Stupak
DeLauro	Martinez	Tanner
Deutsch	Mascara	Tauscher
Dicks	Matsui	Taylor (MS)
Dingell	McCarthy (MO)	Thompson (CA)
Dixon	McCarthy (NY)	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	McDermott	Thurman
Dooley	McGovern	Tierney
Doyle	McIntyre	Trafigant
Edwards	McKinney	Turner
Engel	McNulty	Udall (CO)
Eshoo	Meehan	Udall (NM)
Etheridge	Meek (FL)	Velázquez
Evans	Meeks (NY)	Vento
Farr	Menendez	Visclosky
Fattah	Millender	Waters
Filner	McDonald	Watt (NC)
Forbes	Miller, George	Waxman
Ford	Minge	Weiner
Frank (MA)	Mink	Wexler
Frost	Moakley	Weygand
Gejdenson	Mollohan	Wise
Gephardt	Moore	Woolsey
Gonzalez	Moran (VA)	Wu
Gordon	Murtha	Wynn
Green (TX)	Nadler	

NOES—215

Aderholt	Burr	DeLay
Archer	Burton	DeMint
Armey	Buyer	Diaz-Balart
Bachus	Callahan	Dickey
Baker	Calvert	Doolittle
Ballenger	Camp	Dreier
Barr	Campbell	Duncan
Barrett (NE)	Canady	Dunn
Bartlett	Cannon	Ehlers
Barton	Castle	Ehrlich
Bass	Chabot	Emerson
Bateman	Chambliss	English
Bereuter	Chenoweth	Everett
Biggert	Coble	Ewing
Bilbray	Coburn	Fletcher
Bilirakis	Collins	Foley
Bliley	Combest	Fossella
Blunt	Cook	Fowler
Boehlert	Cox	Franks (NJ)
Boehner	Crane	Frelinghuysen
Bonilla	Cubin	Gallagher
Bono	Cunningham	Ganske
Brady (TX)	Davis (VA)	Gekas
Bryant	Deal	Gibbons



Gilchrest	Lewis (KY)	Salmon	Everett	Largent	Rogers	Meeks (NY)	Rodriguez	Stabenow
Gillmor	LoBiondo	Sanford	Ewing	LaTourette	Rohrabacher	Menendez	Roemer	Stark
Gilman	Lucas (OK)	Saxton	Fletcher	Lazio	Ros-Lehtinen	Millender-	Rothman	Stenholm
Goode	Manzullo	Scarborough	Foley	Leach	Roukema	McDonald	Roybal-Allard	Tanner
Goodlatte	McCollum	Schaffer	Forbes	Lewis (CA)	Royce	Minge	Rush	Tauscher
Goodling	McCrery	Sensenbrenner	Fossella	Lewis (KY)	Ryan (WI)	Mink	Sabo	Thompson (CA)
Goss	McHugh	Sessions	Fowler	Linder	Ryun (KS)	Moakley	Salmon	Thompson (MS)
Graham	McInnis	Shadegg	Franks (NJ)	Lipinski	Saxton	Moore	Sanchez	Tierney
Granger	McIntosh	Shaw	Frelinghuysen	LoBiondo	Scarborough	Morella	Sanders	Toomey
Green (WI)	McKeon	Shays	Galleghy	Lowey	Serrano	Nadler	Sandlin	Trafficant
Greenwood	Metcalf	Sherwood	Gekas	Lucas (KY)	Sessions	Oberstar	Sanford	Turner
Gutknecht	Mica	Shimkus	Gibbons	Lucas (OK)	Shaw	Obey	Sawyer	Udall (CO)
Hansen	Miller (FL)	Shuster	Gilchrest	Maloney (CT)	Shays	Olver	Schaffer	Udall (NM)
Hastert	Miller, Gary	Simpson	Gillmor	Manzullo	Sherwood	Ortiz	Schakowsky	Velazquez
Hastings (WA)	Moran (KS)	Skeen	Gilman	Mascara	Shimkus	Owens	Scott	Vento
Hayes	Morella	Smith (MI)	Goode	McCarthy (MO)	Shows	Pallone	Sensenbrenner	Waters
Hayworth	Myrick	Smith (NJ)	Goodlatte	McCrery	Shuster	Pascrell	Shadegg	Waxman
Hefley	Nethercutt	Smith (TX)	Goodling	McHugh	Simpson	Pastor	Sherman	Weiner
Herger	Ney	Souder	Gordon	McIntosh	Skeen	Paul	Sisisky	Weldon (FL)
Hill (MT)	Northup	Spence	Goss	McKeon	Smith (NJ)	Payne	Skelton	Wexler
Hilleary	Norwood	Stearns	Graham	Metcalf	Smith (TX)	Pelosi	Slaughter	Weygand
Hobson	Nussle	Stump	Granger	Mica	Souder	Peterson (MN)	Smith (MI)	Woolsey
Hoekstra	Ose	Sweeney	Green (WI)	Miller (FL)	Spence	Pomeroy	Smith (WA)	Wu
Horn	Oxley	Talent	Greenwood	Miller, Gary	Spratt	Reyes	Snyder	Wynn
Hostettler	Packard	Tancredo	Gutknecht	Mollohan	Stearns	NOT VOTING—12		
Hulshof	Paul	Tauzin	Hansen	Moran (KS)	Strickland	Cooksey	Miller, George	Sununu
Hunter	Pease	Taylor (NC)	Hastert	Moran (VA)	Stump	Crowley	Pryce (OH)	Towns
Hutchinson	Peterson (PA)	Terry	Hastings (WA)	Murtha	Stupak	Houghton	Rangel	Weldon (PA)
Hyde	Petri	Thomas	Hayes	Myrick	Sweeney	Latham	Rogan	Young (AK)
Isakson	Pickering	Thornberry	Hayworth	Napolitano	Talent	□ 1855		
Istook	Pickett	Thune	Hefley	Neal	Tancredo	Mr. McINNIS and Mr. SHADEGG		
Jenkins	Pitts	Tiahrt	Herger	Nethercutt	Tauzin	changed their vote from “yea” to		
Johnson (CT)	Pombo	Toomey	Hill (MT)	Ney	Taylor (MS)	“nay.”		
Johnson, Sam	Porter	Upton	Hilleary	Northup	Taylor (NC)	So the bill was passed.		
Jones (NC)	Portman	Vitter	Hobson	Norwood	Terry	The result of the vote was announced		
Kasich	Quinn	Walden	Hoekstra	Nussle	Thomas	as above recorded.		
Kelly	Radanovich	Walsh	Holden	Ose	Thornberry	A motion to reconsider was laid on		
King (NY)	Ramstad	Wamp	Hooley	Oxley	Thune	the table.		
Kingston	Regula	Watkins	Horn	Packard	Thurman	PORTUGUESE ASSEMBLY PASSES		
Knollenberg	Reynolds	Watts (OK)	Hulshof	Pease	Tiahrt	RESOLUTION DEALING WITH RE-		
Kolbe	Riley	Weldon (FL)	Hunter	Peterson (PA)	Upton	CENT EVENTS IN EAST TIMOR		
Kuykendall	Rogers	Weller	Hutchinson	Petri	Visclosky	(Mr. POMBO asked and was given		
LaHood	Rohrabacher	Whitfield	Hyde	Phelps	Vitter	permission to address the House for 1		
Largent	Ros-Lehtinen	Wicker	Isakson	Pickering	Walden	minute, and to revise and extend his		
LaTourette	Roukema	Wilson	Istook	Pickett	Walsh	remarks, and include therein extra-		
Lazio	Royce	Wolf	Jenkins	Pitts	Wamp	neous material.)		
Leach	Ryan (WI)	Young (FL)	Johnson (CT)	Pombo	Watkins	Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I rise		
Lewis (CA)	Ryun (KS)		Johnson, Sam	Porter	Watt (NC)	today to introduce into the RECORD a		
			Jones (NC)	Portman	Watts (OK)	resolution that was recently intro-		
			Kaptur	Price (NC)	Weller	duced and passed unanimously by the		
			Kasich	Quinn	Whitfield	Portuguese assembly dealing with the		
			Kelly	Radanovich	Wicker	recent events in East Timor, and I		
			King (NY)	Rahall	Wilson	would like to briefly state one part of		
			Kingston	Ramstad	Wise	that resolution.		
			Knollenberg	Regula	Wolf	It is impossible for the international		
			Kolbe	Reynolds	Young (FL)	community and particularly for the		
			Kuykendall	Riley		U.N. to allow the steadily worsening		
			LaHood	Rivers		situation to continue for one more day		
						without jeopardizing their own credi-		
						bility.		
						Mr. Speaker, I think we have all		
						heard about what is going on in East		
						Timor right now, and it is time for the		
						U.S. Congress for the United States to		
						act.		
						Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr.		
						Speaker, will the gentleman yield?		
						Mr. POMBO. I yield to the gentleman		
						from Massachusetts.		
						Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr.		
						Speaker, I thank the gentleman from		
						California (Mr. POMBO) for yielding.		
						He and I were privileged to meet		
						today with an all-party parliamentary		
						delegation from Portugal. The people		
						of Portugal ought to be commended for		
						taking such a strong moral lead in try-		
						ing to prevent the continued mass		
						slaughter of innocent people in East		
						Timor, and I wish our Government and		

## NOT VOTING—12

Cooksey	Linder	Sununu
Crowley	Pryce (OH)	Towns
Houghton	Rangel	Weldon (PA)
Latham	Rogan	Young (AK)

## □ 1838

Mr. KINGSTON and Mr. COX changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the passage of the bill.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 235, nays 187, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 403]

## YEAS—235

Abercrombie	Bono	Condit
Aderholt	Boucher	Cook
Archer	Boyd	Cox
Armey	Brady (TX)	Crane
Bachus	Bryant	Cubin
Baker	Burr	Cunningham
Ballenger	Burton	Danner
Barcia	Buyer	Davis (VA)
Barr	Callahan	Deal
Barrett (NE)	Calvert	DeLay
Bass	Camp	DeMint
Bateman	Campbell	Diaz-Balart
Bereuter	Canady	Dickey
Biggert	Cannon	Doolittle
Bilbray	Castle	Doyle
Bilirakis	Chabot	Dreier
Bliley	Chambliss	Duncan
Blunt	Chenoweth	Dunn
Boehlert	Coble	Ehlers
Boehner	Collins	Emerson
Bonilla	Combest	English

Ackerman	DeFazio
Allen	DeGette
Andrews	Delahunt
Baird	DeLauro
Baldacci	Deutsch
Baldwin	Dicks
Barrett (WI)	Dingell
Bartlett	Dixon
Barton	Doggett
Becerra	Dooley
Bentsen	Edwards
Berkley	Ehrlich
Berman	Engel
Berry	Eshoo
Bishop	Etheridge
Blagojevich	Evans
Blumenauer	Farr
Bonior	Fattah
Borski	Filner
Boswell	Ford
Brady (PA)	Frank (MA)
Brown (FL)	Frost
Brown (OH)	Ganske
Capps	Gejdenson
Capuano	Gephardt
Cardin	Gonzalez
Carson	Green (TX)
Clay	Gutierrez
Clayton	Hall (OH)
Clement	Hall (TX)
Clyburn	Hastings (FL)
Coburn	Hill (IN)
Conyers	Hilliard
Costello	Hinchey
Coyne	Hinojosa
Cramer	Hoeffel
Cummings	Holt
Davis (FL)	Hostettler
Davis (IL)	Hoyer

## NAYS—187

Inslee
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Klecicka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Larson
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Luther
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Martinez
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McInnis
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)

other governments would follow that strong moral lead. So I am delighted to join with the gentleman in introducing this unanimous strong resolution, and I hope that this is something that is going to lead the way for our own Government and other governments.

One point ought to be clear. People say we cannot intervene in another country's affairs, but the world has never recognized Indonesia's grab of East Timor. We have more legal right internationally to intervene in East Timor than ever existed in Kosovo, because the nations of the world, the United Nations and others, never recognized Indonesia's grab of East Timor. So it is time for the world resolutely to act, and I appreciate the initiative of the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), and I am glad to join with him in introducing this very well-done resolution.

#### RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLEIA DA REPUBLICA ON THE SITUATION IN EAST TIMOR

Whereas the people of East Timor accepted in good faith the tripartite (UN, Portugal, and Indonesia) project of consultation of the people of the territory via a referendum ensuring self-determination of the territory's future;

The voting process was carried out with remarkable civility and represented a rate of participation of approximately 100 percent of the registered voters;

Approximately 80 percent of the voters expressed their clear and unequivocal desire for independence; the voters' freedom and the honesty of the voting process were recognized by the Secretary-General of the UN and by the President of Indonesia;

The Indonesian authorities demanded that maintenance of order during the following referendum would be solely their responsibility;

The Indonesian authorities, having at their disposal significant military and police forces both inside and outside the territory, were capable of ensuring maintenance of order if they had the political will to do so;

Indonesia, to the surprise and indignation of the international community, provided arms to civilian militias which, following the referendum, launched an operation of terror and death in East Timor; and sent to the territory additional military and police elements which not only did nothing to stop the atrocities but also abetted and took part in them;

With the passing of time the situation has deteriorated dramatically, as evidenced by the attacks on and destruction of both the home of the Bishop of Dili who had departed the territory in fear for his life and the compounds of the International Red Cross and the UN itself;

The Indonesian military and police forces are deliberately creating an information gap by expelling journalists and television news personnel with the clear objective of returning to domination of the territory and enabling themselves to launch a second genocide which is indeed already underway;

It is solely the opposition of the Indonesian authorities to entry into East Timor of a multinational peacekeeping force for maintaining order and respect for human rights—a force ready to go in immediately—that has allowed the chaos raging in the territory to continue;

It is impossible for the international community, and particularly for the UN, to allow this steadily worsening situation to continue for one more day without jeopard-

izing their own credibility and their capacity to prevent the massacre of a heroic and defenseless people being cruelly punished for the simple fact of having exercised their right to self-determination and their desire for independence; and

It is clearly evident that the Indonesian authorities are unable or unwilling to guarantee peace and order in East Timor by the means available to them, and that, on the contrary, their military and civilian forces are sowing the seeds of terror and conflict;

The Comissão Permanente of the Assembleia da República, at their meeting of September 7, 1999, after having heard the Primeiro Ministro and the Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, has unanimously approved the following

#### RESOLUTION

In concert with the Presidente da República and the Government, the Assembleia da República is resolved.

1. To intensify political and diplomatic efforts toward making the international community, and in particular the UN and its Security Council, aware of the necessity for the immediate organization, under the aegis of the Secretary-General of the UN, of a multinational peacekeeping force whose purpose will be to put an end to the atrocities occurring in East Timor, to guarantee the peace, and to uphold the rights of the Timorese with respect to their freely-expressed wishes; and toward effecting the immediate dispatch of such a force to East Timor, with the consent of the Indonesian Government to the extent possible;

2. To approve any future decision of the Portuguese Government to authorize inclusion of a Portuguese military contingent in the aforementioned peacekeeping force;

3. To send immediately to the United States a delegation from the Assembleia da República, to include a representative of each party holding seats in the Assembleia, for the purpose of making the President of the UN Security Council, the US Congress, and world public opinion, aware of the clearly inevitable and urgent requirement for organization and deployment of the aforementioned peacekeeping force;

4. To appeal to the conscience of the world that a second genocide of the heroic and martyred people of East Timor be resisted by every means possible, since with their death all confidence in the liberating force of human rights and in the international bodies entrusted with safeguarding security and peace in the world would die also;

5. To condemn in the strongest terms possible the behavior of Indonesian Government, which has refused to fully comply with the New York Accord to which it has subscribed, and which in recent days, in a totally unacceptable manner, has neglected its responsibility to guarantee the security of the Timorese and respect for their will as legitimately expressed in the referendum of August 30;

6. To appeal forcefully to the Secretary-General and the Security Council of the UN, to the Indonesian authorities, and to those elements of Indonesian society who sincerely support aspirations for democracy and peace, reminding them that this critical moment for East Timor represents for them the essence of their historic responsibilities;

7. To applaud the release of Xanana Gusmão, historic leader of the people of East Timor, whose voice, finally free, will undoubtedly strengthen both the efforts underway to ensure peace in the territory and the independence of its people, and his own commitment to reconciliation.

MAKING IN ORDER CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2587, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to consider the conference report on bill, H.R. 2587, that all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration be waived, and that H. Res. 282 be laid upon the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2587, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2587, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2587) making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

□ 1900

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Pursuant to the rule, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of August 5, 1999 at page H7384.)

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK).

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and all time I may yield, of course, will be for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this conference agreement on H.R. 2587, the conference report on the appropriations for the District of Columbia.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the conference agreement endorses the budget and tax cuts which were approved previously by the mayor and council of the District of Columbia. This helps the District's efforts to reorganize, to cut their costs, to reduce their overhead, to reduce the size of the peril of the District of Columbia government.

In conference we retained the initiatives that were in the House bill such as major Federal funding for the largest ever crackdown on the link between crimes and drugs in the District of Columbia, going after, with drug testing and treatment, the 30,000 people in D.C. that are on probation or parole and that are a major source of further offenses. This is to make D.C. streets and neighborhoods far safer.

The conference agreement includes incentives to move children from foster care to adoption in safe, loving, and permanent homes.

It includes Federal funding for pediatric health initiatives for high-risk children in medically underserved parts of the District.

This retains the new program of \$17 million to assist students in the District of Columbia to go to college because they do not have a system of State institutions of higher education. This is to provide tuition assistance to kids in D.C. to be able to go to college.

It has language in the House bill strengthening the popular charter school movement in the conference report also.

The conference agreement has the Federal funding to clean up pollution in the Anacostia River and to complete design work and requirements to alleviate the traffic, stress and congestion with the 14th Street Bridge across the Potomac River between D.C. and northern Virginia.

In total, Mr. Speaker, the conference agreement totals \$429 million in Federal funds. That is 24 million below the House bill, 18 million above the Senate bill, \$255 million less than last year's appropriation because of nonrecurring items that are not in this year's bill.

In District funds, the conference agreement provides 6.8 billion of which 5.4 billion is operating funds; 1.4 is capital outlay.

We also have language requested regarding payment of back attorney fees for indigent attorneys or attorneys representing indigents, we ratify the bold effort made by the City Council and the mayor in reducing taxes, and, Mr. Speaker, we have been careful, of course, regarding what some people refer to as social riders.

There is nothing new, there is nothing new beyond what the House, the Senate and the President of the United States agreed upon last year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have appreciated the opportunity to work in a bipartisan basis. This bill passed the House before with 333 votes, a very bipartisan showing with a large number of Democrats as well as Republicans. However, Mr. Speaker, I am told that many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle even though this is for all intents and purposes the same bill, the same piece of legislation, I am told that many of my Democratic colleagues sadly intend to oppose the bill, not because of something new, not because of something different, not because of something beyond what the President and the House

and the Senate have previously agreed to regarding the District. Unfortunately it appears to be over a drug-related issue, that there is an effort by many activists and extremists to push an agenda to permit the legalization of marijuana in the District of Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, a vote was held many months ago on an initiative referendum to establish such a law in D.C. Congress, the President, and the Senate and the House have acted before to make sure that D.C. does not enact drug laws that contravene the laws of the United States of America. However under the guise of saying that D.C. should have local control or home rule, unfortunately many of my colleagues are saying that this bill should be opposed because it does not permit the District of Columbia to legalize a drug that is illegal under federal law such as marijuana.

It is sad, it is extremely sad to see an extremist position being taken by people to oppose this bill that does so much to help bring the District of Columbia back from the sad shape in which we saw it in recent years.

Mr. Speaker, I find it unfortunate, and I hope that I am mistaken and that people will not oppose this bill because it requires the District of Columbia to stay in tune with the laws of the United States of America regarding drugs. Also, Mr. Speaker, I think it is necessary to remind people article 1, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America says that legislative authority regarding the District of Columbia resides in the Congress of the United States. Some things are delegated to city government, but this Congress retains responsibility for the legislation within the District of Columbia.

So, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to so-called social riders, there is in the bill a continued prohibition on having taxpayers' money used to finance a lawsuit whereby the District is asking to have a vote in the Congress of the United States in the House and in the Senate. It is the identical language that was signed into law by the President last year, and, in fact, frankly there is no need for public financing of such a lawsuit because it is already being fully financed privately and handled on behalf of the District by one of the leading law firms in the country.

There is also people that say, oh, they are upset because the bill continues what the House and the Senate and the President agreed upon a year ago, to say that drug addicts will not be given free needles with taxpayers' money. There is already a private program that does that, Mr. Speaker. There is no need for taxpayers' money. I would hate to think that anyone would take an extremist position of opposing a bill that has anti-drug efforts, pro-education efforts, pro-law and order efforts, tax cuts and the budget that the District adopted, that they want to oppose all these things just because they want to use taxpayers'

money for drug addicts to get free needles.

Mr. Speaker, this is a responsible piece of legislation. We have worked closely with Members across the aisle, with the mayor, with the City Council. I very much appreciate the efforts of the members of the committee and subcommittee and staff on this, and I present this conference report to the House as something totally consistent with what had broad support, bipartisan support in the House just a few short weeks ago, and I would certainly hope that nobody will use some excuse to try to promote an extremist agenda in opposing this bill.

I hope I am mistaken, but I fear that it will occur. I ask people to support this conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present to the House today the conference agreement on H.R. 2587, the District of Columbia Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2000. The conferees met in early August and resolved the matters in disagreement between the House and Senate bills and filed the conference report on August 5th, a little more than a month ago.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the conference agreement endorses the budget and tax cuts approved by the District's mayor and council and helps the District's efforts to reorganize, cut costs and reduce overhead. We were able to retain in conference the initiatives that were in the House bill, such as Federal funding for the largest-ever effort to crack down on the link between drugs and crime, so that DC's streets and neighborhoods will be far safer. The conference agreement includes incentives to move children from foster care to adoption in a safe, loving, and permanent home, and \$2.5 million in Federal funds to complete a community pediatric health initiative for high risk children in medically underserved areas of the District. We also retained the \$17 million in Federal funds for tuition assistance to compensate for the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition so that DC high school graduates will have the same opportunities that exist for students in the 50 States who attend State-supported institutions of higher education. In addition, language in the House bill strengthening the popular charter school movement in the District has been retained. The conference agreement also includes Federal funding to clean up pollution in the Anacostia River and to complete all design and other requirements for the construction of expanded lane capacity for the 14th Street Bridge across the Potomac River.

The conference agreement totals \$429 million in Federal funds, which is \$24 million below the House bill, \$18 million above the Senate bill, and \$255 million below last year's bill. The reduction of \$255 million below last year's bill is due to several non-recurring items funded last year. The total conference amount of \$429 million is \$24 million below our 302(b) allocations in budget authority and outlays. In District funds, the conference agreement provides \$6.8 billion of which \$5.4 billion is in operating funds and \$1.4 billion is for capital outlays. The \$5.4 billion for operating expenses is \$7 million below the House level, \$29 million above the Senate bill, and \$284 million above last year; however, included in this \$284 million increase is a "rainy day" reserve fund of \$150 million.

The conferees have included language under Defender Services that will allow the use of \$1.2 million to pay attorneys for their services to indigents in FY 1999. The DC Courts underestimated the amount required and as a result the attorneys will no longer be paid for their FY 1999 services after tomorrow and there is some question as to the appointment of counsel for the remainder of fiscal 1999. This language will allow the appointments and payments to continue without disruption.

Title II of the conference agreement commends the District for reducing taxes and ratifies the city's action in that regard. One of the initiatives taken by local officials in agreeing to a consensus budget for fiscal year 2000 is to reduce income and property taxes by \$300 million over the next 5 years, including \$59 million in fiscal 2000.

I will include a table showing the amounts recommended in the conference agreement compared with last year's enacted amount, the budget request, and the House and Senate recommendations. I will also include the fiscal year 2000 Financial Plan which is the starting point for the Independent auditor's comparison with actual year-end results as required by section 143 of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, regarding social riders, the conference agreement includes language from the House bill that prohibits the use of both local and Federal funds for abortions except to

save the life of the mothers or in cases of rape or incest. Another provision prohibits the use of both local and Federal funds to implement the District's "domestic partners act". The conference agreement also includes language prohibiting the use of Federal funds for any needle exchange program or to legalize or reduce penalties associated with the possession, use, or distribution of marijuana and other controlled substances. The provision adopted by the House requiring the registration of sex offenders in the District of Columbia is also included in the conference agreement. This language was requested by the City Council after the budget was submitted.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that the bipartisan bill that passed the House six weeks ago with 333 votes—the largest support in 10 years for a DC appropriations bill—included the exact same riders that are in this conference agreement. We need to make it very clear that each of these riders was included in last year's bill—a bill the President signed. There is nothing new in any of the provisions with the exception of the marijuana language which will allow the counting of the initiative ballots. Language in last year's bill did not allow that.

There are not any new social riders to this bill—only those that had previously been approved by the Congress and signed into law by the President. And that's exactly what I have done.

Now during the House debate on this bill, I told the Delegate from the District of Columbia that I would work in the conference to soften the restriction on the use of funds for the voting rights suit. I did that. But I am only one member and I was unable to convince my colleague on the subcommittee, let alone the Senate, to change the language. My point is I did what I said I would do.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we should move ahead and adopt this conference report so that the District government can get about its business of governing and improving the delivery of services to its residents and visitors.

In closing, I want to thank all of our Members for their hard work and their contributions to this bill. The gentleman from Virginia, Mr. MORAN, is the ranking Member and we work very well together. I especially want to thank our full Committee chairman, the gentleman from Florida, Mr. YOUNG, for his support and for his sage advice and counsel. The staff has also done an outstanding job: John Albaugh, Steve Monteiro and Micah Swafford of my staff; and from the Committee staff, Migo Miconi, Mike Fischetti and Mary Porter. They really do a great job. Mary Porter has been doing this for 37 years—hard to imagine. I also want to thank the minority staff—Tom Forhan and Tim Aiken.

This is a good, responsible conference report and I urge its adoption.

## H.R. 2587 - DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
<b>FEDERAL FUNDS</b>						
District of Columbia Resident Tuition Support.....			17,000	17,000	17,000	+17,000
Incentives for Adoption of Foster Children.....			8,500		5,000	+5,000
Citizens Complaint Review Board.....			1,200		500	+500
Federal Payment for Human Services.....			250		250	+250
Metrorail improvements and expansion.....	25,000					-25,000
Federal payment for management reform.....	25,000					-25,000
Federal payment for Boys Town U.S.A.....	7,100					-7,100
Nation's Capital Infrastructure Fund.....	18,778					-18,778
Environmental Study and Related Activities at Lorton Correctional Complex.....	7,000					-7,000
Federal payment to the District of Columbia corrections trustee operations.....	184,800	176,000	183,000	178,000	176,000	-8,800
Federal payment to the District of Columbia Courts.....	128,000	137,440	100,714	136,440	99,714	-28,286
Defender Services in D.C. Courts.....			33,336		33,336	+33,336
Federal payment to the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency of the District of Columbia.....	59,400	80,300	105,500	80,300	83,800	+34,400
Federal payment for Metropolitan Police Department.....	1,200			1,000	1,000	-200
Federal payment for Fire Department.....	3,240					-3,240
Federal payment for Georgetown Waterfront.....	1,000					-1,000
Federal payment to Historical Society for City Museum.....	2,000					-2,000
Federal payment for a National Museum of American Music and Downtown Revitalization.....	700					-700
United States Park Police.....	8,500					-8,500
Federal payment for waterfront improvements.....	3,000					-3,000
Federal payment for mentoring services.....	200					-200
Federal payment for hotline services.....	50					-50
Federal payment for public charter schools.....	15,622					-15,622
Medicare Coordinated Care Demonstration Project.....	3,000					-3,000
Federal payment for Children's National Medical Center.....	1,000		3,500		2,500	+1,500
National Revitalization Financing:						
Economic Development.....	25,000					-25,000
Special Education.....	30,000					-30,000
Year 2000 Information Technology.....	20,000					-20,000
Infrastructure and Economic Development.....	50,000					-50,000
Y2K conversion emergency funding (courts).....	2,249					-2,249
Y2K conversion (emergency funding).....	61,800					-61,800
<b>Total, Federal funds to the District of Columbia.....</b>	<b>683,639</b>	<b>393,740</b>	<b>453,000</b>	<b>410,740</b>	<b>429,100</b>	<b>-254,539</b>
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FUNDS</b>						
<b>Operating Expenses</b>						
Governmental direction and support.....	(164,144)	(174,667)	(162,356)	(162,356)	(167,356)	(+3,212)
Economic development and regulation.....	(159,039)	(190,335)	(190,335)	(190,335)	(190,335)	(+31,296)
Public safety and justice.....	(755,766)	(778,670)	(785,670)	(778,470)	(778,770)	(+22,984)
Public education system.....	(788,956)	(850,411)	(867,411)	(867,411)	(867,411)	(+78,455)
Human support services.....	(1,514,751)	(1,525,996)	(1,526,361)	(1,526,111)	(1,526,361)	(+11,610)
Public works.....	(266,912)	(271,395)	(271,395)	(271,395)	(271,395)	(+4,483)
Receivership Programs.....	(318,979)	(337,077)	(345,577)	(337,077)	(342,077)	(+23,098)
Workforce Investments.....		(8,500)	(8,500)	(8,500)	(8,500)	(+8,500)
Buyouts and Management Reforms.....			(20,000)		(18,000)	(+18,000)
Reserve.....		(150,000)	(150,000)	(150,000)	(150,000)	(+150,000)
District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority.....	(7,840)	(3,140)	(3,140)	(3,140)	(3,140)	(-4,700)
Financing and other.....		(384,948)				
Washington Convention Center Transfer Payment.....	(5,400)					(-5,400)
Repayment of Loans and Interest.....	(382,170)		(328,417)	(328,417)	(328,417)	(-53,753)
Repayment of General Fund Recovery Debt.....	(38,453)		(38,286)	(38,286)	(38,286)	(-167)
Payment of Interest on Short-Term Borrowing.....	(11,000)		(9,000)	(9,000)	(9,000)	(-2,000)
Certificates of Participation.....	(7,926)		(7,950)	(7,950)	(7,950)	(+24)
Human development.....	(6,674)					(-6,674)
Optical and Dental Insurance payments.....			(1,295)	(1,295)	(1,295)	(+1,295)
Productivity Bank.....			(20,000)	(20,000)	(18,000)	(+18,000)
Productivity Savings.....			(-20,000)	(-20,000)	(-18,000)	(-18,000)
Procurement and Management Savings.....	(-10,000)	(-21,457)	(-21,457)	(-21,457)	(-21,457)	(-11,457)
<b>Total, operating expenses, general fund.....</b>	<b>(4,418,030)</b>	<b>(4,653,682)</b>	<b>(4,694,236)</b>	<b>(4,658,286)</b>	<b>(4,686,836)</b>	<b>(+268,806)</b>
<b>Enterprise Funds</b>						
Water and Sewer Authority and the Washington Aqueduct.....	(273,314)	(279,608)	(279,608)	(279,608)	(279,608)	(+6,294)
Lottery and Charitable Games Control Board.....	(225,200)	(234,400)	(234,400)	(234,400)	(234,400)	(+9,200)
Office of Cable Television.....	(2,108)					(-2,108)
Public Service Commission.....	(5,026)					(-5,026)
Office of People's Counsel.....	(2,501)					(-2,501)
Office of Insurance and Securities Regulation.....	(7,001)					(-7,001)
Office of Banking and Financial Institutions.....	(640)					(-640)
Sports and Entertainment Commission.....	(8,751)	(10,846)	(10,846)	(10,846)	(10,846)	(+2,095)
Public Benefit Corporation.....	(66,764)	(89,008)	(89,008)	(89,008)	(89,008)	(+22,244)
D.C. Retirement Board.....	(18,202)	(9,892)	(9,892)	(9,892)	(9,892)	(-8,310)

## H.R. 2587 - DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 — continued

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
Correctional Industries Fund .....	(3,332)	(1,810)	(1,810)	(1,810)	(1,810)	(-1,522)
Washington Convention Center .....	(48,138)	(50,226)	(50,226)	(50,226)	(50,226)	(+ 2,087)
Total, Enterprise Funds .....	(660,978)	(675,790)	(675,790)	(675,790)	(675,790)	(+ 14,812)
Total, operating expenses .....	(5,079,008)	(5,329,472)	(5,370,026)	(5,334,076)	(5,362,626)	(+ 283,618)
Capital Outlay						
General fund .....	(1,711,161)	(1,218,638)	(1,218,638)	(1,218,638)	(1,218,638)	(-492,523)
Water and Sewer Fund .....		(197,169)	(197,169)	(197,169)	(197,169)	(+ 197,169)
Total, Capital Outlay .....	1,711,161	1,415,807	1,415,807	1,415,807	1,415,807	-295,354
Total, District of Columbia funds .....	(6,790,169)	(6,745,279)	(6,785,833)	(6,749,883)	(6,778,433)	(-11,736)
Total:						
Federal Funds to the District of Columbia .....	683,638	393,740	453,000	410,740	429,100	-254,539
District of Columbia funds .....	(6,790,169)	(6,745,279)	(6,785,833)	(6,749,883)	(6,778,433)	(-11,736)

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Fiscal Year 2000 Financial Plans  
(In thousands of dollars)

	Local funds	Grants and other revenue	Gross funds
<b>Revenue:</b>			
<b>Local sources, current authority:</b>			
Property taxes	693,700	0	693,700
Sales taxes	620,000	0	620,000
Income taxes	1,185,100		1,185,100
Other taxes	348,500	0	348,500
Licenses, permits	48,498	0	48,498
Fines, forfeitures	56,771	0	56,771
Service charges	34,173	0	34,173
Miscellaneous	93,558	318,574	412,132
Tax Parity Act	(58,950)	0	(58,950)
Subtotal, local revenues	3,021,350	318,574	3,339,924
<b>Federal sources:</b>			
Federal payment	23,750	0	23,750
Grants	0	1,231,408	1,231,408
Subtotal, Federal sources	23,750	1,231,408	1,255,158
<b>Other financing sources:</b>			
Transfer Interest Income from Control Board	0	23,000	23,000
Lottery transfer	69,000	0	69,000
Subtotal, other financing sources	69,000	23,000	92,000
Total, general fund revenues	3,114,100	1,572,982	4,687,082
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
<b>Current operating:</b>			
Governmental Direction and Support	137,134	30,222	167,356
Economic Development and Regulation	52,911	137,424	190,335
Public Safety and Justice	565,511	213,259	778,770
Public Education System	681,356	113,708	795,064
Human Support Services	590,938	890,988	1,481,926
Public Works	258,341	13,054	271,395
Receiverships	217,606	124,471	342,077
Financial Authority	3,140	0	3,140
Nonunion pay increase	8,500	0	8,500
Buyouts and Other Management Reforms	0	18,000	18,000
Optical and Dental Benefits	1,295	0	1,295
Reserve	150,000	0	150,000
Productivity Bank	20,000	0	20,000
Productivity Savings	(20,000)	0	(20,000)
Management Reform and Productivity Savings	(7,000)	0	(7,000)
General Supply Schedule Savings	(14,457)	0	(14,457)
Subtotal, current operating	2,645,275	1,541,126	4,186,401



	Local funds	Grants and other revenue	Gross funds
Other financing uses:			
Debt service			0
Principal and interest	383,653	0	383,653
Other financing uses:			0
D.C. General	44,435	0	44,435
University of the District of Columbia	40,491	31,856	72,347
Subtotal, other financing uses	468,579	31,856	500,435
Total, general fund expenditures	3,113,854	1,572,982	4,686,836
Surplus/(Deficit)	246	0	246
Enterprise fund data:			
Enterprise fund revenues:			
Water and Sewer Authority	0	236,075	236,075
Washington Aqueduct	0	43,533	43,533
D.C. Lottery and Charitable Games Board	0	234,400	234,400
Sports and Entertainment Commission	0	10,846	10,846
Public Benefit Corporation	0	89,008	89,008
D.C. Retirement Board	0	9,892	9,892
Correctional Industries	0	1,810	1,810
Washington Convention Center Authority	0	50,226	50,226
Total, enterprise fund revenue	0	675,790	675,790
Enterprise fund expenditures:			0
Water and Sewer Authority	0	236,075	236,075
Washington Aqueduct	0	43,533	43,533
D.C. Lottery and Charitable Games Board	0	234,400	234,400
Sports and Entertainment Commission	0	10,846	10,846
Public Benefit Corporation	0	89,008	89,008
D.C. Retirement Board	0	9,892	9,892
Correctional Industries	0	1,810	1,810
Washington Convention Center Authority	0	50,226	50,226
Total, enterprise expenditures	0	675,790	675,790
Total, revenues versus expenditures	0	0	0
Total, operating revenues	3,114,100	2,248,772	5,362,872
Total, operating expenditures	3,113,854	2,248,772	5,362,626
Revenue versus expenditures	246	0	246

## D.C. APPROPRIATIONS ACTS

## General Provisions

Following is a list of when a general provision first appeared in an appropriations act

(using the general provisions in the FY 2000 Appropriations Act conference report as the base year and going back to FY 1973)

Section	Page	Conference Report—H.R. 2587 (Report 106-299)	First year	No. of years
101	13	All contracts are a matter of public record	1981	19
102	13	All vouchers covering expenditures shall be audited before payment	1973	27
103	13	Appropriations are the maximum amounts	1973	27
104	13	Allowances for privately owned vehicles for official duties set by the Mayor	1973	27
105	13	Travel expenses concerned with official business to be approved by the Mayor	1973	27
106	13	Refunds and judgment payments to be made by District government promptly	1973	27
107	13	Public assistance payments to be made without reference to the D.C. Public Assistance Act	1973	27
108	13	No appropriation available for obligation beyond current fiscal year	1973	27
109	14	No funds for partisan political activities	1973	27
110	14	No funds available to pay any employee whose name, grade and salary history is not available for inspection	1979	21
111	14	Funds are available for making payments authorized by the Revenue Recovery Act	1979	21
112	14	No funds shall be used to support or defeat legislation pending before Congress	1979	21
113	14	Mayor to develop an annual capital borrowing plan	1982	18
114	14	Council approval needed for capital project borrowings	1982	18
115	14	No capital project money is to be used for operating expenses	1982	18
116	14	Reprogramming restrictions	1983	17
117	15	No funds for personal cook, chauffeur or other servants	1973	27
118	15	No funds to purchase vehicles with less than 22 miles per gallon rating	1982	18
119	15	Compensation of City Administrator and Board of Directors of Redevelopment Land Agency set at level 15 of District Schedule	1983	17
120	15	Provisions of Merit Personnel Act of 1978 shall apply to D.C. employees	1983	17
121	15	Mayor to submit to Congress revised revenue estimates at end of first quarter	1986	14
122	15	No sole source contracts may be renewed or extended without competitive bids	1988	12
123	16	Balanced Budget Act definitions clarified	1988	12
124	16	Sequestration order from U.S. Treasury to be paid within 15 days after receipt of request	1989	11
125	16	Acceptance and use of gifts subject to certain restrictions	1992	8
126	16	No Federal funds to be used for expenses of Congressional offices under DC Statehood Constitutional Convention Initiatives	1991	9
127	16	University of DC (UDC) to prepare quarterly financial reports	1996	4
128	17	Funds for new hardware and software are also available for purchase of new financial management system (FMS)	1998	2
129	17	Cap on attorney fees for actions brought against the D.C. government under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	1999	1
130	18	No funds available for abortions except where the life of the mother would be endangered or in cases of rape or incest	1980	20
131	18	No funds available to implement Health Care Benefits Expansion Act of 1992 for cohabiting couples	1993	7
132	18	DC Public Schools (DCPS) to prepare quarterly financial reports	1995	5
133	18	DCPS and UDC to prepare annual Full Time Equivalent positions reports	1996	4
134	19	DCPS and UDC to prepare revised budgets within 30 days of enactment of appropriations bill to align budget with anticipated expenditures	1996	4
135	19	Boards of DC schools and library to approved budgets prior to submission in Mayor's annual budget	1996	4
136	19	Ceiling placed on total operating expenses	1996	4
137	21	Receivership budgets to be included in Mayor's annual budget submission without revision by Council or Mayor	1998	2
138	21	DCPS employees classified in a certain manner	1996	4
139	22	Restrictions on use of official vehicles	1998	2
140	22	Sources of payment for detailees is from requesting entity's budget	1998	2
141	22	Special need students of the DCPS are to be evaluated or assessed within 120 days of referral	1999	1
142	23	No funds available to DC entities unless they comply with Buy America Act	1995	5
143	23	No funds available for the annual audit of DC financial statements unless conducted or contracted by the IG	1999	1
144	23	No funds available for reorganization plans unless plans approved by the DC Financial Authority	1993	7
145	24	Evaluation of DCPS employees a non-negotiable item for collective bargaining purposes	1996	4
146	24	No funds available for a petition to require Congress to provide voting representation for DC	1999	1
147	24	No funds available to transfer inmates classified above the medium security level as defined by the Federal Bureau of Prisons transferred to Youngstown, Ohio.	1999	1
148	24	Beginning with FY 2000, the District government is to include in its annual budget submission a \$150 million reserve to be expended according to criteria established by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and approved by the Mayor, Council and DC Financial Authority.	1999	1
149	25	Within 30 days of enactment of the appropriations act the CFO shall submit to Congress a revised budget of the approved appropriations	1999	1
150	25	No funds are available for the distribution of sterile needles or syringes for hypodermic injection of any illegal drug	1999	1
151	25	No funds available for rental payments under a lease unless certain conditions are met		
152	25	No funds available for new leases and real property purchases unless certain conditions are met		
153	26	Amend Student Loan Marketing Association Reorganization Act of 1966 to set aside \$5 million for a credit enhancement fund for public charter schools		
154	26	Within 90 days of enactment of the appropriations act, the city government shall implement a process to dispose of excess school real property		
155	26	Extend date for charter schools authorization		
156	26	Sibling preference to be given to charter school applicants		
157	27	Authority to transfer \$18 million from the DC Financial Authority for severance payments to individuals separated from DC employment during FY 2000		
158	27	Authority to transfer \$5,000,000 from the DC dedicated highway trust fund for design work to expand the land capacity on the 14th street bridge		
159	27	Mayor to carry out through the Army Corps of Engineers an Anacostia River environmental cleanup program		
160	27	Prohibits payment of administrative costs from the Crime Victims Compensation Fund		
161	28	No funds available to pay salary of any chief financial officer who has not filed a certification that the officer understands the duties and responsibilities of the officer as a result of the approved appropriations act.		
162	28	Specify potential adjustments in next years' budgets to meet mgmt reforms savings		
163	28	Describe "misc." budget categories in the annual budget submission		
164	29	Authorizes the Army Corps of Engineers to contract with the City to improve the SW Waterfront		
165	29	Sense of Congress that DC should not impose certain restrictions on an industrial revenue bond for a project of the American Red Cross		
166	29	Permits Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency to carry out sex offender registration program		
167	30	No funds available to enact or carry out any program to legalize or reduce penalties associated with possession, use, or distribution of any schedule I substance—modified—no ballot count allowed last year.	1999	1
168	30	Authority to transfer \$5,000,000 from DC Financial Authority for commercial revitalization empowerment zones		
169	31	Directs Secretary of the Interior to implement a notice of decision concerning the issuance of right-of-way permits to locate a wireless communications antenna on Federal property in DC.		
170	31	Sense of Congress that in considering the FY 2001 DC budget, Congress will take into consideration progress or lack thereof concerning certain items		
171	32	Prior to using Federal Medicaid payments to Disproportionate Share Hospitals (DSH), the Mayor should consider recommendations of the Health Care Development Commission.		
172	32	GAO to conduct a study of DC Justice System to identify components most in need of additional resources		

WASHINGTON, DC, September 9, 1999.  
Re District of Columbia appropriations bill.  
Hon. JAMES MORAN,  
Rayburn HOB., Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. MORAN: I have enjoyed the opportunity to work cooperatively on the Appropriations Subcommittee for the District of Columbia, to help our nation's capital rebound from its years of troubles. That is why I was so surprised and disappointed this morning to read the letters that you sent last night to all Members of Congress.

In your letters, you take a highly extremist position that all our efforts to improve our nation's capital should be thrown away, so that you can promote a pro-drug agenda.

I fear your position would bring D.C. back to the worst of the Marion Barry days, when the loose attitude toward illegal drugs made

the city the butt of late-night talk-show jokes.

Yet your letters state that all the good work we have done on this bill is unimportant, that instead only four issues matter:

1. You want to spend taxpayers' money to finance the lawsuit challenging the U.S. Constitution's denial of statehood status (votes in Congress) for D.C., even though this questionable suit is already filed and being handled free by a leading law firm.

2. You want to spend taxpayers' money to give free needles to drug addicts, to inject themselves with illegal drugs.

3. You want the District to provide "domestic partner" benefits to unmarried live-in lovers of public employees.

4. You want to permit the District to legalize marijuana, despite federal laws to the contrary.

Your position is even stranger to understand, because the first three of these four simply repeat provisions already signed into law by the President. (The "domestic partner" restriction has been signed into law multiple times). Evidently, it must be the fourth item that is most important to you.

You attempt to couch this issue in terms of "home rule," as though every city in the country were able to adopt laws contrary to those of the nation and of the states. Where do you draw the line? If you say it's OK for D.C. to legalize marijuana, then what's next? Legalizing cocaine? Or heroin? Or perhaps rape and murder? Under your rationale, it would be fine with you if the District of Columbia did any of these. You would argue for their right to do so, and ignore the victims. You would say it's a "home rule" issue, even in the nation's capital.

The issue is not whether you choose to be pro-marijuana, or pro-needle exchange. The issue is whether you take an extremist stance—disregarding all the good contained in this legislation because these other issues are so much more important to you.

I'm amazed that you also make these pro-drug stances more important than the 14th Street Bridge project in the bill, which tries to improve the traffic snarls between Washington, D.C., and your congressional district in northern Virginia.

Let me remind you about some of the good and solid things we have worked together and that this bill does, but which you now seek to block:

- Making it far easier for the District to keep making its government smaller, more efficient and more responsive.

- Strengthening and funding charter schools,

- Creating college opportunities for D.C.'s kids, with millions in new scholarship funds for them, including extra help for those who attend school in Virginia,

- Launching America's strongest effort to break the link between crime and drugs, (including drug-testing and treatment for all offenders on probation or parole),

- Funding aggressive adoption efforts to find new homes for abandoned kids,

- Cleaning-up the Anacostia River, and

- Lowering taxes in the District, as approved by the mayor and council.

The bill also honors and approves the budget approved by D.C.'s mayor and council. We respected this key aspect of "home rule".

I'd like to remind you that the bill's language, requiring that D.C. not legalize drugs which are illegal under federal law, was approved by the entire House of Representatives without objection on a voice vote, and while you were on the House floor. If you wanted to kill the bill because you want to let D.C. legalize marijuana, then was the time to do so—in public and on C-SPAN, not with private letters to House Members such as you have now sent quietly.

And you never even attempted a vote on the "domestic partners" issue, you know the House has rejected your position many, many times.

This bill has hundreds of millions of dollars of federal money for Washington, D.C. It is not too much to expect some common-sense provisions to accompany the money.

Further, the other three items mentioned in your letters—no public money for the lawsuit or for a needle exchange program or for "domestic partners" benefits—were both contained in the bill last year. The identical language was then approved by the House and by the Senate and signed into law by the President.

Finally, none of the items you now question were changed during the House-Senate conference. These provisions are identical with the bill passed by the House, and for which you voted. I am perplexed by why you now choose an extremist position rather than the solid position you took when you voted for the bill just a few weeks ago.

I regret that your actions, by sending your letters to all House Members, might complicate our future efforts to work within the subcommittee. However, I do not intend to let this happen. I pledge nevertheless to continue working with you in good faith on all issues. We may disagree on various things, but that's no reason to abandon the good we can do together.

Very Truly Yours,

ERNEST J. ISTOOK, Jr.,  
Member of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) will

control the 30 minutes, and the gentleman from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I was out talking with the Mayor of the District of Columbia on the phone when this bill came up. I appreciate the Chair's clarifying that I will be managing this bill.

As my colleagues know, it is sad and unfortunate that we find ourselves in this position because the D.C. appropriations bill really ought to be one that we could reach consensus on, send to the White House, get signed, and get out of the way and deal with the other bills. It should almost be done in a perfunctory fashion because, as the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK) remembers, and I know he voted for the legislation, in 1997 we voted for the D.C. Revitalization Act, and what that said was that we are no longer going to do things in the way that had traditionally been done with regard to the District of Columbia. We are going to give them as much home rule as our Constitution allows. What we are going to do is to take the functions that other States perform, and the Federal Government is going to perform them, and the local functions, the functions that our cities perform, we are going to fund those with the same kind of grants and contracts that the cities in our legislative districts receive.

So D.C. is going to be treated the same way that any of our own local jurisdictions would be treated.

Mr. Speaker, the problem is that D.C. has not been treated the way that we would have treated our own constituents. That is why we oppose this bill.

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK) has done a terrific job. I hope he listens to this although he is talking with the very distinguished ranking member of the full committee. But I want him to know that I appreciate what he has done as an appropriations chairman. As an appropriations bill, this is a good bill. It deserves support. The problem is not with the appropriations. The problem is with the authorizing legislation that has been attached to an appropriation bill. That is the extremist legislation.

Mr. Speaker, who is the extremist here? We are appropriators. We do not have any business getting into needle exchanges, and into abortion, and into same-sex marriages, and into medical medicinal use of marijuana. All that kind of stuff, that is not our job. We appropriate money, and if we had stuck to appropriations, everything would have sailed through. But we did not. We came out of the House with a bill that had a number of riders although there had been some compromise, and there was an agreement we would do what we could to compromise with the Senate.

Well, we go into the conference committee. We find out there have been pre-conference meetings that the Democrats did not even know about,

never mind participate in. So we walk in, and it is a done deal. Virtually no room for maneuver, virtually no room for any kind of negotiation or compromise, and boy did we take the most reasonable position imaginable.

Let me suggest to my colleagues some of the most reasonable things that one could imagine that we suggested that were rejected. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) had a proposal that I think was wrong for last year. He prohibited D.C. from even counting the ballots on whether the referendum as to whether there should be medicinal use of marijuana. This year he prohibited the use of drugs that included marijuana, made it a criminal penalty. So in conference we suggested, well, let us at least clarify some very important points.

I offered an amendment that said first of all that the prosecutors will still be able to plea bargain agreements. If somebody is caught with marijuana, and they know that there is a major distributor out there, and they could get some information on the major distributor instead of somebody that is using marijuana for some kind of recreational use but had no prior record or whatever, let us not stick them with a mandatory criminal penalty.

□ 1915

Let us let the prosecutors perform their job as they would with any other criminal penalty. Make sure they are allowed to plea bargain.

Secondly, let us make sure that we are not unintentionally prohibiting the legal use of other drugs, such as Marinol, which apparently is a derivative of marijuana but is regularly prescribed as a painkiller. We do not want to make legal drugs illegal. So what could be more reasonable? We offered that. I just assumed that it would be accepted. Rejected. Not even any discussion.

We suggested, in terms of the use of needles, this free needle exchange. We have an enormous problem in the District of Columbia. There is an article in the Washington Post today that shows that the number of children infected by their mothers because of dirty needles, that the number of children infected with the HIV-AIDS virus has gone up 70 percent between 1988 and 1997. D.C. has a worse problem than any other jurisdiction in the country.

So we suggested, let us have the language say you cannot use federal or local funds for the needle exchange program, but let us at least let a private nonprofit organization function. Let us just put that language in, to make sure that Whitman-Walker can carry out its own program. We should not have any business in restricting a private nonprofit from doing what private funds enable it to do. Rejected. Not accepted.

So it went on like that. The Senate thought it was a deal to accept the social riders that they did not have; and

in return, they cut the money that the House had. What kind of a compromise is that? It was a lose-lose, when it should have been a win-win situation.

So the major reason why we oppose this goes back to the golden rule: do unto others as you would have them do unto you. In this case it applies to our own local jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, we would not impose the kinds of restrictions on any of our local jurisdictions that are imposed on the District of Columbia.

Let me give you an example. Sixty-seven State and local government health care plans allow health care coverage for domestic partners. Ninety college and university health care plans, 70 Fortune 500 company health care plans and at least 450 other private company not-for-profit and union health care plans have that kind of coverage.

I have never seen a Member of this Congress stand up and ask that those organizations in their district not be able to have that coverage. We are not talking about federal funds.

Likewise, I have never seen any Member of Congress that has a congressional district in California, Oregon, Nevada, Alaska, Arizona or Washington State offer an amendment to block the implementation of a ballot initiative on the medical use of marijuana.

It was approved in California. Where are the Members coming up and saying, despite what the voters of my jurisdiction did, I want to prevent them from carrying out the results of that referendum? We have not done it to ourselves. On none of these things have we done it to the people in our own constituency, yet we would do it to the District of Columbia. That is why we oppose the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I will reserve the balance of my time, because we want to hear from the one democratically elected delegate from the District of Columbia who truly is elected to represent her constituency, and get her point of view.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman from Virginia and others try to couch this issue as though it were home rule or local control, as though every city in the country were able to divorce itself from the rest of the country and adopt laws contrary to the laws of the Nation and the laws of the States.

Where do you draw the line? If you say it is okay for D.C. to legalize marijuana, as the gentleman from Virginia argues, then what is next? Do you say it is okay for them to legalize heroin, to legalize cocaine, to legalize murder, rape, arson? Where do you draw the line?

Under the rationale of the gentleman from Virginia, it would be fine if the District of Columbia legalized anything whatsoever, disregarding the

laws of the country, disregarding the Constitution that makes this Congress responsible for the laws of the District of Columbia. If you legalize marijuana, what is next? Cocaine? Heroin? Where do you draw the line?

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT), a member of the subcommittee.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the District of Columbia appropriations conference report. We all hope some day the District of Columbia will be a crown jewel in our republic form of government, a place we are all proud of, a place that we will bring our families with pride in our hearts and a place that is safe and clean, where the citizens greet each other with a smile. I believe this conference report takes us a long step in that direction.

First of all, this conference report does have a lot of pro-home rule provisions. The District of Columbia Council approved a budget. The Mayor approved the very same budget. This conference report continues along that same line and supports the District of Columbia's budget. I think that is self-rule where it counts, in the budget area, in the finances.

Now, there have been problems. There have been problems with the District of Columbia following the guidelines that this body has laid forth. District of Columbia employees have taken automobiles outside the District of Columbia, against the guidelines. The District of Columbia has paid for abortions with tax dollars, against the guidelines. But, to the credit of this Mayor and the City Council, they have made long strides in overcoming the areas where they have fallen short, and I think that is why there is such strong support for their budget.

But the opposition seems to be in very radical areas. Number one, the opposition says that we want to finance challenging the U.S. Constitution, something that has been around since almost when George Washington was a corporal. It is already going forward. It is going forward pro bono, or free, and we ought to let that proceed, without taxpayer dollars.

If there was a provision to allow the people of the District of Columbia to become part of Maryland so that they could vote in congressional districts in Maryland, I would be glad to help support that. We have seen part of the District of Columbia being yielded back to Virginia, and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) represents part of that area as I recall. So perhaps we could move the balance of the District of Columbia into Maryland's congressional districts.

But that is not the issue here. They want to go for statehood, and that is something that has been around for the endurance of our Constitution.

They also want to take taxpayer dollars and buy needles to give illegal drug users the opportunity to shoot up illegal drugs in their veins.

Now, there have been a lot of areas that have had similar programs. Baltimore has had a program for 7 years. They found out this summer that 9 out of 10 injection drug users are infected with a blood-borne virus, 9 out of 10 who are in the program. Now, if 9 out of 10 are getting a virus, a blood-borne virus, and they are in the needle exchange program, I would consider that failure. How do you define failure, if that is not failure? Yet that is the very thing that you want to fund, and that is the very reason you want to oppose this piece of legislation, so we can take tax dollars and use them for a needles program.

I want to encourage all of my colleagues to support this conference report.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I just want to clarify some things that I know my friend, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT), inadvertently must have left out, because I think it is relevant to inform the Members that every single scientific and medical study has affirmed that needle exchange programs in fact do work with the highest-risk population in our urban areas. Baltimore's works particularly well, and that is why they continue it as one of the few programs that has worked effectively, because it brings people into the system where they can get into substance abuse prevention programs, reduction programs, and it enables them to be monitored so that you can limit the spread of AIDS.

The National Institutes of Health, the American Medical Association, the Centers for Disease Control, we can go right down the line. Every prestigious organization that you would think would have an opinion has done a study, and they have all come to the conclusion that needle exchange programs do not increase the use of the illegal drugs, and they do reduce the transmission of the HIV-AIDS virus.

But the other thing that inadvertently might have been omitted, or I guess actually it was misstated, but I think I know the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK) or the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) would want me to clarify, because we are not talking about the use of taxpayer funds. That is what was referred to. The amendment in conference would have precluded the use of federal or local public funds. It only allowed private money, not taxpayer money, for the needle exchange program.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the Congress has forced me and D.C. elected officials to the outrageous position of opposing our own appropriation. No local budget has any business here, but the least D.C. residents are entitled to is respect. Once their elected officials have submitted a frugal balanced budget, D.C. went even further. The local budget

has tax cuts that the majority likes and a surplus, signalling that the city has pulled itself out of fiscal crisis.

I ask for a no vote, not because of attachments. The District has long lived with attachments, and I would not ask for a no vote because of attachments alone. The opposition of the District is based on new and unprecedented inroads into self-government for the first time in 25 years of home rule.

First, the bill takes funds slated for urgent District priorities and redirects those funds. In addition, not only have attachments grown more numerous, now they are prepackaged in the bill before it even goes to subcommittee. Further, whatever the District wins, fair and square, along the way, does not matter. The Committee on Rules simply reverses the vote and reinstates defeated amendments. We lose even when we win.

Yet the District now has a new management-oriented Mayor with a proven track record of fiscal prudence and a revitalized City Council. If anyone has been reasonable during this process, I believe I am that Member.

The bill has gotten this far not because it is fair to the District. It would never have gotten to conference except that I stretched to be fair to the Committee on Appropriations that had worked hard on a bill that had some features I supported.

□ 1930

Even yesterday I asked the Committee on Rules to send the bill back as I considered new approaches that might satisfy all concerns. I believe, and Members who know me know I believe, in negotiation over confrontation.

Many Members did not want to vote for an appropriation that had attachments they opposed. Many more simply did not want to be dragged into controversial local issues. Nevertheless, I counseled a yes vote because of promises made and of prospects for improvement. The bill passed only because many Members voted for it as a courtesy to me.

Out of the same courtesy and out of respect for the people I represent, I now ask Members to oppose the conference report before us. The bill has grown worse in conference as the Senate simply piled on with unrelated additions, and the House made no improvements and kept no promises.

The District should not be asked to grovel to get its own money. I stand here to put Members on notice that I will never grovel before this House to get the money to which we are entitled, our own money. Nor should the District be asked to live with automatic attachments and redirected local spending. If we do not send this bill back to conference, it will be vetoed.

Mr. Speaker, the new city, the new District of Columbia that on its own might, with its own sacrifices, has risen from the ashes, deserves better. District of Columbia residents deserve much better.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would have to note, in response to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), and it has been a good opportunity to work together, but if we saw, as was presented, if the Members of her party, the Democrat members, the 160 or so who voted for the bill before, switch their votes today because the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia asks them to, then I would have to wonder who is in charge of the votes of those Members. Is it the people who elected them, or have they locked up their votes and handed them to another person, in the person of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

I would certainly hope that constituents would not find that their Members of Congress changed their votes just because the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) was unhappy.

I would have to say that the things of which they complain, and we have put in the RECORD a chart, these are nothing new. These are what has been part of this bill for years. We have not added anything new. The only thing new is in their extremism to get the District of Columbia to be legalizing drugs, to go back to the days when it was the butt of late night talk show jokes about the then mayor of the District and drug use.

If they want the scenario of the Nation's Capital legalizing drugs, as they have said in their letters sent to other Members of this Congress, then the American people need to know that that is the agenda and that is why the Democrats in this body are opposing this bill, because it is their desire to legalize marijuana, which this bill does not permit our Nation's Capital to do.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, let me start by saying I cannot think of another Member whose opinion on this I respect more than the delegate, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON). She has worked very hard and been a great partner in helping to bring the Capitol city back, and ably represents that city.

My friend, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), we have worked very hard on these issues together. As part of the Washington metropolitan region, I think he deeply cares and is concerned about the District.

We come to a different conclusion about this bill. There are good things in this bill, as has been outlined by my friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma, and there are things in this bill that are in it that I do not like, as have been outlined by my friends on the other side.

But at the end of the day, if I vote to reject this bill, I am basically voting for a no for \$17 million additional dollars for the D.C. College Access Act.

This is a first-time opportunity for children in the District of Columbia graduating from high school to pay State university costs, to attend State universities in other places in the country, similar to the right that the people in my State get to go to the University of Virginia or George Mason or the University of Maryland and pay in-State tuition, something affordable to them when otherwise they would have to pay out-of-State tuition. That is unreachable for many able students in the District of Columbia. So Members vote to reject that if they vote this down.

They vote to reject more dollars for charter schools, which have gone a long way. Over 2,000 students have signed up for charter schools in the District of Columbia, and a long waiting list to get back in, people who want the opportunities for education this alternative offers within the public school system.

We would be rejecting a \$5 million study of the 14th Street bridge that can add an additional lane there at the interchanges where the Parkway feeds into that. If Members vote no, they are voting to reject that and sending it back and taking our chances.

We are rejecting a \$5 million Federal appropriation for the cleanup of the Anacostia River. This is critical for the city and for its economic redevelopment and comeback.

Most of all we are rejecting, Congress, acceptance of the D.C. consensus budget, something put together by the Control Board, the mayor and the council, working in harmony. That is what the crux of the whole control board legislation was, to get everybody working and singing from the same page.

There are some provisions in this bill that I find obnoxious, that I did not support. One is not allowing the city to sue over its statehood right, a suit I think they will probably lose, but I think they ought to have that right, since we do not give them the right to vote on the House floor, something I think the city deserves.

That was in the bill last year. I do not think by itself that that means we should reject all of these other items in the appropriation bill. This is not new, unprecedented inroads. This in fact was in the bill last year.

The needle exchange program is something I think reasonable people can disagree about. We waiver back and forth when we hear the arguments. But this was in the legislation last year and we supported it, and the President signed it. This is not a new, unprecedented inroad.

Cellular telephone towers at Rock Creek Park, this obnoxious movement into home rule was put on by the Democratic leader in the other body. Members may find that an obnoxious provision, but that was something put on by the Democratic leader in the other body. That is a first-time unprecedented inroad, but I do think by itself

is not grounds for rejecting this legislation.

The domestic partners legislation and the prohibitions on the funding for abortion have been in this legislation for years and years and years. This body has on a consistent basis, although many of us do not like some of these provisions, has voted for that because we did not think it overcame the positive things that have come out of these appropriation bills.

Mr. Speaker, I, like my colleagues on this, am not happy with every provision of this bill. I stood in the well of the House and spoke against some of these provisions when they came up for amendment on the House floor. But there is much good in this bill.

The fact that the consensus budget has been agreed to without the kind of tampering we have seen in this body in the past, the fact that the college access program is funded for the first year and we can get that off the ground, a \$5 million study for the 14th Street bridge, cleanup for the Anacostia River, money for charter schools, money for drug abuse, these items I think make this legislation worthwhile to support.

On those grounds I am going to support this legislation, and urge my colleagues to support the conference report.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about extremism. I ask my friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma, to perhaps listen as we talk about extremism.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk to my friend, the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS), with whom I agree so much of the time. I say to him, the good news is that if we reject this conference report, I do not think we will ultimately lose any of the good things of which the gentleman spoke. If we do, it will be a mean-spirited action, indeed, because I presume they are included, because the gentleman's side of the aisle as well as my side of the aisle think those things are positive. We agree on them.

I do not rise because I want to legalize drugs. No matter how many times the chairman tries to articulate my reason for taking my action, it will not make it so, Mr. Speaker.

Nor will I oppose this bill because the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) tells me to, although I will tell my friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK), I believe that the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is due great deference on this issue, because in this democracy she has been elected by Americans, American citizens, almost 600,000 of them, as we have seen, to represent their views. Those views represented by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms.

NORTON) are due deference, in my opinion.

But I will oppose this bill for what I believe to be one of the most extreme, tyrannical, dictatorial provisions that I have ever seen in a bill on this floor. It is a shameful provision in this bill. For the American Congress to take the position that an American citizen cannot seek redress in the courts of this land through its corporate structure I say is un-American. It is contrary to the principles that the people's houses ought to represent.

I am shocked that it was not dropped in conference. The fact of the matter, the chairman has said, oh, it was in last year's bill, so those who hear that statement will say, oh, well, it must have been, and it was. But last year's bill was included in a bill that appropriated \$400-plus billion. It was incorporated in a bill that we had to pass at the last minute because of the failure of the Committee on Appropriations to pass its appropriations bills seriatim, so we did them all in one package, so the President was left with really no alternative.

So in this bill we incorporate a provision, and Mr. Speaker, it is not made better because it was included last year. It is made worse that we would repeat this error, this egregious denial of democracy, where we say to the citizens of the District of Columbia, you cannot go to court and say that the way you are being treated is unconstitutional.

That is the basis of our government. Why? Because it says to every individual, no matter how small, whether they are 99 and 9 tenths percent not agreed to by the rest of us, that they have the inherent right as a citizen of this country to go to the courts and seek redress of their grievances.

Mr. Speaker, this provision of the bill is offensive to democracy, offensive to our Constitution, offensive to the basic rights of individuals to redress their grievances in the only way the Constitution sets forth ultimately for the minority. The majority can redress its grievances by voting in this body. The majority can always redress its grievances. But the genius of our system is that we provide a procedure where even the minority can redress its grievances. That is addressing the court.

This bill ought to be rejected for the inclusion of that provision alone.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think some people could have been thoroughly confused by what we just heard from the gentleman from Maryland.

This bill does not stop anybody from going to court. The gentleman knows better than what he has said. They have already filed that lawsuit. It is already in court. It is already pending before the judge for a decision. This bill did not stop anybody from going to court, it just said they cannot use taxpayers' money to finance the lawsuit.

They have one of the best legal firms in the country, Covington & Burling,

handling that lawsuit that the gentleman claims people are stopped from bringing. They are already in court. It is already happening. The bill just says we do not use taxpayers' money to pay for that lawsuit.

To pretend that somehow this has denied people access to the courts would be just plain hogwash.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

□ 1945

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, for the first time in history and in the last Congress, we had over 20,000 children in the D.C. school system request to go to summer school, not because they had to, but because they wanted to.

We are trying to turn the entire education system around in D.C. to where most of the children that graduate are functionally illiterate and those who do not graduate drop out. The system has totally gone bankrupt.

Education, public works, the city, a mayor sniffing cocaine and putting the rest of it up his nose, the system to where we had school board members that were hired because of their political affiliations to Marion Barry. The mayor today is a bright light and has tried to work with this Congress and I think has done very well.

Charter schools. The education system. We did not cut public education. We actually increase education dollars and the charter schools. Thanks to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS), for the first time in this bill, children in D.C. can go to other universities of other States and not have to pay that tuition.

I mean, that is fantastic, those kinds of changes that have been made in this.

The Anacostia River. How many have ever been up to Bladensburg? Look at the mud flats, the toxic wastes that are up there. For years, it has piled up. The Anacostia River has more parts per fecal than any river in the United States of America. Why? Because every time it rains, the sewage from D.C. system flows into that valley, and all of that fecal material goes into that river.

It is so bad, there is so much bacteria that it soaked up all the oxygen in the Anacostia, and that is why the fish died, bacteria taking up oxygen.

The Navy has agreed to dig out those areas with toxics and the PCB. We have established a \$25,000 fine for dumping. I took a little boat up there. One cannot even get one's boat up there for the beer cans and the dump and the trash.

These are good things. It is a health hazard. It is an economic hazard. And we are changing those kinds of things.

Mary Williams has worked with us to revitalize that waterfront. Go down there. There are empty lots down there full of beer bottles and trash because the D.C. system wanted a year-by-year lease. They get money under the table. Well, we will give one a lease but one has got to give a little bit of money back to me. That liberal system failed.

We are putting in 30-year leases so that there will be businesses established down there. We want to take that whole waterfront and turn it into a San Francisco waterfront where we have got businesses that are creating dollars instead of the neglect that D.C. has given it.

The gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) says, "We did it on our own." I do not believe that. The system was so far out of line that the control board had to be established. For 40 years, the Democrats did nothing. The neglect for D.C. Look at the education system. Look at the crime. Look at the streets. Look at everything.

We took the majority. We established a control board. We are coming in. We are changing the school systems. We are cleaning up the Anacostia River. We are cleaning up the waterfront. They want to oppose it because they want to give drug addicts needles, or they want to legalize marijuana.

I disagree with my friend from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) that every study has not been conclusive. Take a look at Sweden and other areas. I ask for a "yes" vote on this bill.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) to respond to the statement of the gentleman from Oklahoma (Chairman ISTOOK).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, to clarify on the court suit, the measure in the bill keeps our corporation counsel, the one lawyer with expertise in District affairs, from even looking at the papers that had, in fact, been drawn by the private law firm, on his own time. When our corporation counsel did so on his own time, after getting permission of a court, a Member of this body wrote him and asked him to submit all of his leave records. If that is not extreme, the word needs a new definition.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I would yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the distinguished ranking member of the full Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Oklahoma says that the District of Columbia should not be able to use taxpayers' dollars to petition for the right to be represented in this body. What he forgot to tell us is that it is their money. Each of us represents half a million people, and we cast a vote on their behalf in this chamber. This bill says that the city cannot even use its own money to pursue the right in court to have their own voting representative.

Now, one may disagree with their right to have that idea, but to say that the City cannot use its own resources and has to depend on private fund raising in order to achieve a public right is, to me, the ultimate act of antidemocratic arrogance.

These are Americans we are talking about. These are taxpayers we are talking about. Yet, we say that they have

to go hand in hand to raise private money in order to achieve their own public rights. That is outrageous to be heard in any democratic institution. If big brother is going to tell the City what their own ordinances can contain, then at least that City ought to have a voting right in this body, and they ought to be able to use their own resources in order to try to achieve that end.

If he disagrees with the idea that they ought to have a voting right in this body, so be it. But they have a right to use their own money the way their own local taxpayers want it to be used, not the way the gentleman from Oklahoma thinks is correct. That is the ultimate big brother arrogance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentlemen from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) each have 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I would suggest that my friend across the aisle who has such harsh words for this provision ought to be addressing those harsh words to the President of the United States who signed into law the identical provision word for word, comma for comma of which they now complain.

That is the only reason why it remains in this bill because it was approved last year by the House and Senate even before it was an omnibus bill and then signed into law by the President of the United States. Thus, that being the position that these bodies and the White House have taken before, it remains the position.

We had a vote in the body. The Senate was not willing to change on this provision, and it remains as it has been. But it does not cost anybody their rights to pursue their desire to have a vote in this Congress. The lawsuit is in court. It is pending. They have one of the top-notch law firms in the country representing them at no cost to the taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for yielding me this time.

I wanted to touch base real quickly on this lawsuit a little bit, Mr. Speaker, because what the lawsuit is about is Washington, D.C.'s right to become a State, and that is something that this Congress has voted on, and the votes fell short. So now Washington, D.C. is trying to take a court route for their right, and I do support their right to go to court.

But I want to remind everybody today we voted to reduce funding for something that is also very important to our counties and municipalities around the country, and that is the CDBG, the Community Development Block Grant program. Let us say, if some counties out there did not like the amount that we voted on, should

they be suing us, and should we give them money to sue us for that?

This matter that is pending in court has been debated on this floor in the House. It has been voted on by this floor of the House, and it was voted down. I am sorry that folks in Washington, D.C. want to take this to court. They do not like this legislative process. But that is why we have a legislative process. There are winners, and there are losers in it.

On the issue of home rule, Washington, D.C. as a city grew up around the Capitol of the Nation. This was a swamp. There was the City of Georgetown, but there was not Washington, D.C. until the United States Capitol came here. Because of that, there has always been a relationship between the government and Washington in terms of who is going to run what.

I believe there was not home rule for a while, and then there was home rule up until something like 1871, and then it was lost because one of the mayors 100 years ago was spending too much money on roads, and Congress took the right of home rule away. Then I think in, what, in the 1970s, it came again.

Then in 1994, there were debates about taking home rule away. Because of the leadership of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) and many others who said, wait, that is too harsh on this city. Let us keep home rule in place, and let us work through this control board. A lot of things, because of their position taken by these folks and their leadership, prevailed.

The university, the law school, and the hospital, all of which 2 to 3 years ago were on the chopping block to be cut, but because of the autonomy of Washington, D.C., they were able to retain that.

There is a relationship between the Congress and Washington, D.C. It is not always a happy marriage, but it is there. They will probably not have complete home rule for many years to come. But in the meantime, I, as a Member of Congress, cannot vote to legalize marijuana in Washington, D.C. I cannot give them that option, because what about the other cities who want to do that or some of the other proposals like needles to drug addicts? If Washington, D.C. wants that, is it not fair to give that option to all other cities across the Nation? We as a Congress have voted not to do that.

Now, there are a lot of good, positive things in this bill, despite the fact that we disagree on much.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond.

The gentleman, for one thing said with regard to the needle exchange programs that we should provide such authority to all the jurisdictions. Every jurisdiction in the country has the authority to determine whether or not they want a needle exchange program. A great many of them, I think it is 113 cities, have chosen to do so.



All we are saying is the District of Columbia, under a democratic, small "d," form of government ought to be able to make that decision on their own. Our language which said no Federal funds and no local public funds should at least have been accepted so one can use private funds.

But with regard to the voting rights act, let me suggest to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), who is my friend, the gentleman who consistently underscores the fact that the White House signed a bill that included this language, we have a written correspondence from the Executive Office of the President making clear that the administration opposes language included in both bills which would prohibit the use of Federal or District funds to provide assistance for petition drives or civil actions that seek to require voting representation in Congress for the District of Columbia.

That was an omnibus bill. There were hundreds of provisions, thousands of them, actually, if one has gone into all the different tax provisions and so on. Politics is the art of compromise. We had to keep the government going, and there was some compromise sought. But that legislation expired at the end of this fiscal year.

So the administration feels I know very strongly that that legislation should not be renewed and would be one criteria for vetoing this bill.

Again, as the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) says, there are some things that do require some resources from the District of Columbia, such as the D.C. Corporation Counsel being able to review the legal briefs to make sure there is no problem with the litigation that the private law firm is bringing forward. I am not talking about much money. Pennies. One has to know it is nothing that would even show up in an appropriations bill.

But to be so extreme as to prohibit D.C. Corporation Counsel from reviewing that legal brief just does not seem fair or appropriate and does seem to the extreme.

Now, I was looking for the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS). The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) represents the City of Baltimore, and, Mr. Speaker, he feels very strongly, having seen the very positive impact of the needle exchange program in Baltimore with regard to the serious drug problem that they are experiencing, that this is a proven program that should be renewed.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from Baltimore, Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS).

□ 2000

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to address this whole issue of the courts. As a lawyer of 21 years, I am very concerned about this. It is interesting to listen to this argument as basically a new Member and listen to the other side talk about how

the law firm is doing its thing and working hard for the District. And I certainly applaud that, but the thing that they fail to say is that this is something that has been basically rammed down their throats.

It is nice for that law firm to be doing this, but when we hear the words of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), which really shocks the conscience when she talks about the fact that the corporation counsel on his own time has to then go back and report to a Member of Congress, I do not think any Member of this body would stand for that kind of thing in their district.

There is a portion of the Bible that says a very simple, simple thing; and I think that we ought to think about it more in this body, and as a new Member I say it to my colleagues: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." As I said before a little earlier, I do not think any Member of this body would stand for the people in their districts not being represented and not having the funds and not being able to use their funds to do the things that they want to do.

On the issue of needle exchange, I want to make it clear. I started not to speak, because I did not want this bill and this effort to be viewed as a needle exchange effort. It is not about that. But the needle exchange portion is very important because it is about saving lives.

I hope that none of my colleagues on the other side, and those people who may be against needle exchange, ever have the opportunity to attend the funeral of someone whose body is all shriveled up. I hope they never have a loved one who is lying in bed in pain, and in so much pain they do not even know they are in pain. I hope they never experience that, but I have seen it in Baltimore.

I do not have to go to Sweden; I can go 45 miles away from here and see a program that works and works very effectively. The people of the District of Columbia are simply saying we want to do this; we want to use our funds to do this, and they are asking us to yield and give them that opportunity.

So when we err, and we always worry about erring on the side of what is right or erring on the side of what is wrong; but if we err, let us err on the side of life and not death. Let us err on the side of those programs that do work. As I said, we do not have to go to Sweden; we can go 45 miles away and see something that works. I see it every day. I see it working. I see crime reduced. I see the number of AIDS cases reduced. I see the number of people on drugs reduced. And I see that in my district.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK) has 3 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT), a member of the subcommittee.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I simply wanted to rise this evening in support of the conference report. The subcommittee has worked very diligently under its chairman's leadership to put this bill together.

Opponents of this bill claim that this is a question about home rule. The Constitution, in Article 1, Section 8, gives Congress the ultimate responsibility for decisions affecting the District. The subcommittee has upheld the Constitution and found ways to work positively with the D.C. government.

The subcommittee approved intact the same budget that the D.C. Council and the Mayor approved. Also, this bill ratifies \$59 million in tax relief that the D.C. Council and Mayor approved as well.

Almost all of the so-called riders are incidental to what Congress passed and the President signed last year. These measures provide common sense policies that all Members should support. For example, why should we allow the District of Columbia to spend funds to legalize marijuana when such efforts contradict current law?

But aside from these measures, this bill has many other positive aspects. There are funds to provide better education for children by strengthening public charter schools. There are funds to provide high school graduates with millions of dollars for new scholarship opportunities and more choices when deciding which college to choose.

This is a bill that will continue, in my opinion, to improve our Nation's Capital. I urge support of the conference report.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I think we have made our point. Number one, this is a good appropriations bill. If the Members wanted to change the national law with regard to the medicinal use of marijuana, with regard to needle exchanges, with regard to a host of other issues, there are dozens of social riders in this thing, we should go to the Committee on the Judiciary, the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary is here, and let him take them up. Let it go through the authorization process, not the appropriations process.

We have agreed that there will not be federal funds used for any of these controversial measures. No federal funds. We are not arguing that. We are just saying treat D.C. like we treat the jurisdictions in our own congressional districts. That is all we are asking. And if we were to do that, we would all vote for this appropriations bill because it is a good appropriations bill. It has tax cuts, it has a surplus, and it does the right thing.

We should do the right thing for the District. Vote against this. Let us get a real appropriations bill.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

It is pretty simple for most people to weigh the good against the bad. We have a bill that has a balanced budget, reducing the size of D.C. government, streamlining it, helping it be more efficient and effective. There is scholarship money for kids to go to college. Charter schools are strengthened so they are not trapped in dead-end schools. It has the Nation's best new program to fight the link between crime and drugs. We have in this bill opportunity; we have cleanup of the Anacostia River. We have all of these good, strong, solid things.

What is on the other side of the scales? Well, it does not let the District of Columbia legalize marijuana, and it does not let them use public money for a lawsuit that is already filed and being paid by private individuals. Therefore, they say, that outweighs everything else in this bill. How extreme. How extreme.

And for people to say they will reverse their support, 160 Democrats going to reverse their support because they have surrendered their vote to an extreme position, following the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia; that they have surrendered their vote. What will their constituents think? That outweighs all the good in this bill. To legalize drugs? No. Vote for the conference report.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the District of Columbia, but in opposition to this Appropriations conference report. Our Capital City and its residents deserve to enjoy the benefits of the democratic process without interference from the Congress. This conference report is full of provisions that adversely affect the government of the city.

The right of self-governance is something that all of us take for granted. We take for granted that our respective districts, whether they are large metropolitan cities like Houston, or small rural towns, depend on the democratic process. In every place, except for the District of Columbia, the decisions made by the locally elected government are respected.

Even when these local officials make decisions that we might not agree with, there is no congressional action taken to overturn them. This is because local government is subject to a democratic process that provides an internal system of checks and balances. If the people do not like the decision of their officials, then the people vote those officials out of office.

This same process occurs here in Congress. We are also subject to the will of the people. However, we live and work here in the District of Columbia, and we insist that the principle of democracy we hold so dear does not apply. How hypocritical!

This Congress should be ashamed of this conference report. Once again, we intend to force the will of our special interests against this city. Proposals that we would not dare entertain in our own districts, we impose on the District.

We require the District government to jump through various hoops so that the elected mayor can receive his powers to govern. We humiliate the elected City Council by over-

seeing every piece of legislation they consider. We continue to treat the city and its residents as if they do not exist.

However, this year D.C. has proven that its government works and that its elected officials can handle the day-to-day management of the city. With a new mayor and city council, this city is on its way to financial recovery. The city has even submitted a sound budget with a surplus.

Congress should reward that progress by staying out of the internal affairs of the District government. Their citizens pay their taxes, vote and work just as hard as our constituents at home and we should not infringe upon their rights as American citizens.

The conference report includes provisions that restrict certain uses of District government funds. It includes the provision that prohibits federal and District funds from being spent on needle exchange programs.

The needle exchange program could help the District combat the spread of AIDS through contaminated needles, but this Congress has decided that D.C. residents cannot benefit from this sort of program. This Congress determined this program was too controversial for the D.C. government to spend its own funds.

Although this report does allow the city to count the ballots from the referendum on the legalization of marijuana, the city cannot spend any of its funds to reduce penalties or for legalization. If another state had a similar ballot referendum, this Congress would not prevent the results from being known, nor would we interfere with the implementation of such.

It continues to prohibit the use of District funds for abortion, although no such prohibition exists for other states. It also prohibits the use of funds for extending rights to domestic partners. Again, this would not be heard of for any State.

Since the federal payment to D.C. was eliminated in 1997, the Congress has no interest in how funds are spent in the city. Unfortunately, the appropriation process in the District is being held hostage to the interests of a few who would seek to continue the "big brother" watch over the city.

Although we are approaching the 21st century, the beginning of a new millennium, in Washington, DC, it is more like 1984—like the book written by George Orwell. Watch out D.C., "Big Brother" is watching your every move!

Please support the notion of local governance that we fight so ardently for in our own jurisdictions. Let's give a strong vote of confidence to the new mayor and city council in the District by voting against this conference report.

The citizens of the District of Columbia are not second-class citizens. They are just as important as my constituents in Houston are and as any of your constituents. Do not continue to send the message to the District residents that we do not care about democracy in this city. Vote against this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 208, nays 206, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 404]

YEAS—208

Aderholt	Gillmor	Packard
Archer	Gilman	Pease
Armey	Goode	Peterson (PA)
Bachus	Goodling	Petri
Baker	Goss	Phelps
Ballenger	Graham	Pickering
Barcia	Granger	Pitts
Barr	Green (WI)	Pombo
Barrett (NE)	Greenwood	Porter
Bartlett	Gutknecht	Portman
Barton	Hansen	Quinn
Bass	Hastert	Radanovich
Bateman	Hastings (WA)	Ramstad
Bereuter	Hayes	Regula
Biggert	Hayworth	Reynolds
Bilbray	Hefley	Riley
Bilirakis	Herger	Rogers
Bliley	Hill (MT)	Rohrabacher
Blunt	Hilleary	Ros-Lehtinen
Boehlert	Hobson	Royce
Boehner	Hoekstra	Ryan (WI)
Bonilla	Horn	Ryun (KS)
Bono	Hostettler	Salmon
Brady (TX)	Hulshof	Sanford
Bryant	Hunter	Saxton
Burr	Hutchinson	Scarborough
Burton	Hyde	Sensenbrenner
Buyer	Isakson	Sessions
Callahan	Istook	Shadegg
Calvert	Jenkins	Shaw
Camp	Johnson (CT)	Shays
Canady	Johnson, Sam	Sherwood
Cannon	Jones (NC)	Shimkus
Castle	Kasich	Shuster
Chabot	Kelly	Simpson
Chambliss	King (NY)	Skeen
Chenoweth	Kingston	Smith (MI)
Coble	Knollenberg	Smith (NJ)
Coburn	Kolbe	Smith (TX)
Collins	Kuykendall	Souder
Combest	LaHood	Spence
Cook	Largent	Stearns
Cox	LaTourette	Stump
Crane	Lazio	Sweeney
Cubin	Leach	Talent
Cunningham	Lewis (CA)	Tancred
Davis (VA)	Lewis (KY)	Tauzin
Deal	Linder	Taylor (NC)
DeLay	LoBiondo	Terry
DeMint	Lucas (KY)	Thomas
Dickey	Lucas (OK)	Thornberry
Doolittle	Manzullo	Thune
Dreier	McCollum	Tiahrt
Dunn	McCrery	Toomey
Ehlers	McHugh	Upton
Ehrlich	McIntosh	Vitter
Emerson	McIntyre	Walden
English	McKeon	Walsh
Everett	Metcalf	Wamp
Ewing	Mica	Watkins
Fletcher	Miller (FL)	Watts (OK)
Foley	Miller, Gary	Weldon (FL)
Fowler	Moran (KS)	Weller
Franks (NJ)	Myrick	Whitfield
Frelinghuysen	Nethercutt	Wicker
Gallegly	Ney	Wilson
Ganske	Northup	Wolf
Gekas	Norwood	Young (FL)
Gibbons	Nussle	
Gilchrest	Ose	

NAYS—206

Abercrombie	Brady (PA)	Davis (IL)
Allen	Brown (FL)	DeFazio
Andrews	Brown (OH)	DeGette
Baird	Campbell	Delahunt
Baldacci	Capps	DeLauro
Baldwin	Capuano	Deutsch
Barrett (WI)	Cardin	Dicks
Becerra	Carson	Dingell
Bentsen	Clay	Dixon
Berkley	Clayton	Doggett
Berman	Clement	Dooley
Berry	Clyburn	Doyle
Bishop	Condit	Duncan
Blagojevich	Conyers	Edwards
Blumenauer	Costello	Engel
Bonior	Coyne	Eshoo
Borski	Cramer	Etheridge
Boswell	Cummings	Evans
Boucher	Danner	Farr
Boyd	Davis (FL)	Fattah

Filner	Lowey	Rothman
Forbes	Luther	Roybal-Allard
Ford	Maloney (CT)	Rush
Fossella	Maloney (NY)	Sabo
Frank (MA)	Markey	Sanchez
Frost	Martinez	Sanders
Gejdenson	Mascara	Sandlin
Gephardt	Matsui	Sawyer
Gonzalez	McCarthy (MO)	Schaffer
Goodlatte	McCarthy (NY)	Schakowsky
Gordon	McDermott	Scott
Green (TX)	McGovern	Serrano
Gutierrez	McInnis	Sherman
Hall (OH)	McKinney	Shows
Hall (TX)	McNulty	Sisisky
Hastings (FL)	Meehan	Skelton
Hill (IN)	Meek (FL)	Slaughter
Hilliard	Meeks (NY)	Smith (WA)
Hinchey	Menendez	Snyder
Hinojosa	Millender-	Spratt
Hoefl	McDonald	Stabenow
Holden	Minge	Stenholm
Holt	Mink	Strickland
Hooley	Mollohan	Stupak
Hoyer	Moore	Tanner
Inslee	Moran (VA)	Tauscher
Jackson (IL)	Morella	Taylor (MS)
Jackson-Lee	Nadler	Thompson (CA)
(TX)	Napolitano	Thompson (MS)
Jefferson	Neal	Thurman
John	Oberstar	Tierney
Johnson, E. B.	Obey	Trafigant
Jones (OH)	Olver	Turner
Kanjorski	Ortiz	Udall (CO)
Kaptur	Owens	Udall (NM)
Kennedy	Pallone	Velazquez
Kildee	Pascrell	Vento
Kilpatrick	Pastor	Visclosky
Kind (WI)	Paul	Waters
Klecza	Payne	Watt (NC)
Klink	Pelosi	Waxman
Kucinich	Peterson (MN)	Weiner
LaFalce	Pickett	Wexler
Lampson	Pomeroy	Weygand
Lantos	Price (NC)	Wise
Larson	Rahall	Woolsey
Lee	Reyes	Wu
Levin	Rivers	Wynn
Lewis (GA)	Rodriguez	
Lofgren	Roemer	

## NOT VOTING—20

Ackerman	Miller, George	Roukema
Cooksey	Moakley	Stark
Crowley	Murtha	Sununu
Diaz-Balart	Oxley	Towns
Houghton	Pryce (OH)	Weldon (PA)
Latham	Rangel	Young (AK)
Lipinski	Rogan	

□ 2032

Mr. SHOWS changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. HERGER and Mrs. CHENOWETH changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

# WE MUST ACT ON EAST TIMOR NOW

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this morning I woke up to read in the paper a high-level administration official comparing our choices in East Timor to whether he asked his daughter to clean up her room.

I find this comment offensive, offensive to the people of East Timor who are paying with their lives for trusting the international community; paying

with their lives by having 78 percent of the people vote for independence; offensive to the four priests I met on August 20 in Suai, East Timor, who are now rumored to be murdered; offensive from a representative of the United States which for the past quarter century has trained, armed and equipped the Indonesian police and military, who in turn organized and armed the militias now rampaging throughout East Timor.

Rather than talking about their kid's room, the Clinton administration should be announcing a cutoff of U.S. aid to Indonesia until the violence in East Timor stops and the people can return to their homes safely.

I am proud to join with my colleague, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY), in introducing legislation to oppose an immediate suspension of all U.S. assistance to the government of Indonesia. I urge all my colleagues to join us and send a message to the administration, as well as to Indonesia, that we will not stand by while East Timor burns.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, DC, September 8, 1999.

WILLIAM S. COHEN,  
Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense,  
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY COHEN: I read today a summary of your position on the East Timor crisis in USA Today, which emphasized your absolute rejection of U.S. troops participating in any peacekeeping force. While I can understand your legitimate concerns regarding U.S. commitments already in place around the world, as well as for the safety of our troops, I was disappointed and dismayed that nothing was put forward about what the Pentagon might be willing to support to stop the slaughter in East Timor. Hopefully, this was the fault of the reporter and does not accurately reflect your complete views on East Timor.

Laying aside for the moment the participation of U.S. troops at some time as part of a multinational peacekeeping force in East Timor, I would hope that you would agree the U.S. could and should provide financial support to such an operation, as well as warships (similar to what Britain has already put in motion), helicopters, medical personnel, and other transport, logistical and communications support. A forceful public pledge of such support might provide the signal other nations in the region are looking for to move forward with their own commitments to such a peacekeeping mission.

The United States has been a strong and vocal supporter of the U.N.-brokered plebiscite that took place on August 30, where over 78% of the East Timorese voted for independence. What credibility will the United States and the international community have if the reward for embracing democracy is death and destruction? Is it not indeed in the U.S. interest to help in stopping the current slaughter in East Timor?

Over the past quarter century, the Department of Defense spent considerable time and funds in training, equipping, and arming the Indonesian military and police, who in turn, organized and armed the militias currently rampaging in East Timor. Just as U.S. policy now supports the democratization of Indonesia and the referendum process in East Timor, so now should the Pentagon help to protect the vulnerable East Timorese people who embraced that process.

Time is of the essence. As you are well aware from your briefings, every hour, let

alone every day, increases the death toll and forcible displacement of the people of East Timor. I look forward to seeing more concrete, constructive and affirmative statements from you and the Pentagon on how to stop the killing and resolve the crisis in East Timor.

Sincerely,

JAMES P. MCGOVERN,  
Member of Congress.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Sept. 9, 1999]  
ONLY INTERVENTION CAN STOP THE VIOLENCE  
EAST TIMOR: THE JAKARTA GOVERNMENT, UN-  
ABLE TO CONTROL ITS RENEGADE ARMY, HAS  
LOST LEGITIMACY

Jose Ramos-Horta shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996 with Roman Catholic Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, whose home was burned to the ground Tuesday by militias roaming Dili, the capital of East Timor. Ramos-Horta spoke with Global Viewpoint editor Nathan Gardels on Wednesday.

Question: Why is the violence taking place now, after the independence vote? Who is committing it?

Answer: The killing is a well-designed strategy prepared for a long time by the Indonesian Army intelligence and special forces. They have their own agenda, and it is very simple: They are not prepared to relinquish East Timor, regardless of the vote in favor of independence and regardless of the commitment by Indonesian President B.J. Habibie.

The so-called "militias" are a fiction. Most of these militia members are not East Timorese opposing autonomy but are Indonesians recruited from West Timor. Among the militias are special forces and Indonesian police in plain clothes. And it is not even these militias that are carrying out the main violence. They don't have the firepower to destroy buildings. And where on Earth would these local militias get the means to ship tens of thousands of people out of East Timor? The Indonesian army, like the Serbian army in Kosovo, arranged for this mass deportation of our people. They have provided the ships to take the people away.

Q: What is the objective of their campaign?

A: To overturn the vote. As far as the army is concerned, the vote is history. They know if they don't accept it, there is no one who will enforce it. Again, let me stress: The war is not being waged by the 20% of the East Timorese who voted for autonomy over independence. We had meetings with all their leaders and they were prepared to accept the vote and join us in a power-sharing arrangement. It is the Indonesian Army that is waging this war.

Q: The martial law that has been declared, then, will consolidate the military control of East Timor, not stem violence?

A: Absolutely. Martial law only strengthens the power of the military. Neither President Habibie nor the defense minister have the power to stop the army. In the context of a democratic country, the Indonesian Army is a renegade army. Along with the special forces, they are a law unto themselves in East Timor.

Q: What, then, is the solution?

A: The only solution is international intervention. If the United Nations Security Council does not fulfill its obligations and call for armed intervention, then countries that have a conscience and resources—Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the Europeans—should do it.

Q: Even if the government in Jakarta does not invite them in?

A: A government that cannot honor its international obligations because it cannot control its renegade army does not exist from the standpoint of international law.

The army has hijacked the legitimacy of Indonesian sovereignty. It is a false issue to argue that intervention by the outside world requires the approval of Jakarta.

Q: Are you hopeful about a U.N. Security Council resolution?

A: No, I am not. Some Security Council members insist on an invitation from Jakarta.

Now that U.N. personnel have left East Timor, the violence will escalate. East Timor will be betrayed once more and left alone at the mercy of the Indonesian Army. Thousands and thousands will die in the next few days.

I also cannot say I am hopeful that the Australians and others might take action on their own. I can only pray for a divine inspiration that will summon those with decency to go in and fight for justice, to save the people of East Timor.

[From Human Rights Watch, Sept. 6, 1999]

EAST TIMOR: THE WORLD MUST ACT OR BE COMPLICIT IN THE KILLING

(New York—September 5, 1999)—Human Rights Watch today charged that Western governments were not doing all they could to stop the violence spreading across East Timor in the wake of the vote in favor of independence there last week.

"Indonesia seems bent on leaving East Timor the same bloody way it went in," said Sidney Jones, Asia director of Human Rights Watch. "Western governments will be complicit in the killing if they fail to use any and every means possible to force the Indonesian government to either stop the militia violence or allow international peacekeepers in." Jones dismissed as "nonsense" the suggestion that the militias—created, supported, and armed by the Indonesian army—were beyond Jakarta's control or that they were acting at the behest of "rogue" elements of the armed forces. "The only evidence one needs of Jakarta's involvement is that some 15,000 army and police are in East Timor doing absolutely nothing to stop the terror, arrest the perpetrators, or protect the victims."

"This shows every sign of being planned and coordinated beforehand," she said. "The Indonesian army may be trying to teach a lesson not only to the East Timorese but to the people of Aceh and Irian Jaya. The lesson is: if you seek separation from Indonesia, even if support for separation is overwhelming, we will destroy you, and no outside power will come to your aid." She said it was absurd to explain the violence simply in terms of the pro-Indonesia militias being poor losers.

The increasing invective over the last week in the Indonesian press and on the part of Jakarta-based politicians against the United Nations, Australia, and the U.S. was serving to discredit those most visibly involved in the referendum process.

Human Rights Watch said Indonesia's major donors and trading partners, including the U.S., Australia, Japan, and the European Union should agree on coordinated and targeted sanctions, including suspension of direct budgetary support and other forms of non-humanitarian aid. That aid would be resumed if and when the violence was brought under control. Since it appeared that the Indonesian army had no intention of bringing the militias to heel, Human Rights Watch said, the leverage should be used to persuade President Habibie to accept an emergency international peacekeeping force.

Military training and transfers of equipment—such as U.S. \$5 million in aircraft parts pending from the U.S.—should also be halted. At the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit convening in New

Zealand later this week the crisis in East Timor, and coordinating sanctions should be a top priority.

The main arguments against a peacekeeping force thus far have been that Indonesia would never agree (and without Indonesia's agreement, the Security Council would never approve), and that it would take too long to deploy. Australia, New Zealand, Portugal, and the United Kingdom have been reported at various times to be considering such a force that some have termed a "Coalition of the Willing," the bulk of whose forces would almost certainly have to come from Australia. If Indonesia gave a green light, a rapid deployment would probably be possible. But as of Sunday afternoon New York time, there was no evidence that the Indonesian government had changed its stance of rejecting international peacekeepers.

In the meantime, East Timorese are being attacked in the schools and church compounds where they have sought refuge, most international journalists have left, and by Sunday evening Dili time, the militias were in control of most of the territory.

"The international community paid for this referendum to happen," said Jones. "It sent more than 1,000 expatriate staff to Dili as part of the United Nations Mission in East Timor and hired more than 4,000 local staff, all of whom are in serious danger of militia attack because of their UNAMET association. Its failure to even try to use maximum leverage has turned these people into sitting ducks for militia gunfire."

[From Human Rights Watch, Sept. 7, 1999]

EAST TIMOR: MARTIAL LAW WILL MAKE THINGS WORSE

NEW YORK, September 7, 1999.—Human Rights Watch said today that President Habibie's declaration of martial law in East Timor, apparently at the urging of Indonesian armed forces commander General Wiranto, could make a terrible situation worse. It urged Indonesia's donors to continue to press Habibie to invite an international peacekeeping force to East Timor. The text of the September 6 decree had not been made public as of Tuesday morning, Jakarta time, but was expected to include authorization for the army to shoot on sight and make arrests without warrants. As many as 6,000 new army troops were expected to be sent to East Timor as a result. Indonesian officials gave no indication of how long martial law would last.

"The army says the violence is out of control, but in fact, the army's behind it," said Sidney Jones, Asia director of Human Rights Watch. "It says pro-autonomy groups are clashing with pro-independence groups, but this is not a two-sided conflict. It's a one-sided, well-organized, premeditated rampage, led by fully armed militias and backed by local troops."

Jones said the militias were systematically attacking refugees, journalists, and people associated with the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET). "The army organized and armed these militias in the first place," she said. "Since senior officers at any time could have arrested soldiers and militia leaders involved in murderous attacks but did not, why on earth should anyone believe that martial law and more troops will solve the problem?" Jones said the existing troops in East Timor did not need the extraordinary powers that martial law confers. "They just need the political will to act," she said.

Human Rights Watch said it was concerned that with almost all international journalists out of East Timor and most foreigners evacuated save for some 100 UNAMET staff holed up in the UN compound in Dili, the

army could now use martial law as a cover for furthering the work of the militias. "One test will be whether members of the Aitarak militia, responsible for some of the worst violence over the last three days, will be arrested and charged," Jones said. The international community has been urging Indonesia to either stop the violence or invite international forces in to do so.

A five-person delegation from the U.N. Security Council left for Jakarta Monday evening New York time with a mandate to insist that Indonesia take steps in the next forty-eight hours to curb the violence. The martial law decree appears to be Indonesia's response to growing international pressure to act. In interviews with Jakarta newspapers, General Wiranto continues to insist that Indonesia is fully capable of resolving the problem without international assistance and maintains that no international forces will be permitted in East Timor until November, when Indonesia's highest legislative body, the People's Consultative Assembly, ratifies the results of the referendum held last August 30. In that ballot, almost 80 percent of East Timorese voted to reject an offer of autonomy and separate from Indonesia.

## URGENT

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, our colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), nominated Bishop Belo for the Nobel peace prize; and shortly thereafter, I visited East Timor about 2 years ago. I want to read a fax that I just received in my office about East Timor. The man said this is a deliberate, carefully planned operation. The militia are not out of control. They are, in fact, firmly under the control of the Indonesian military. East Timor is an Asian Kosovo. Asian Kosovo; and then he goes on to say that a gentle 80-year-old nun who helped work for Bishop Belo has been shot. Bishop Belo's home has been burned down. Bishop Belo has fled the country. And he ends by saying the neck of a 3-year-old child was wrung while his family watched.

This administration has to speak out and deal with this issue, and they have to speak out and deal with this issue before the end of the day.

URGENT

September 9, 1999.

Congressman FRANK WOLF,  
241 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WOLF: I'm aware of your interest in the people of East Timor and am contacting you because I believe you may not have heard of the massacre at Suai. Details of this event follow later in this message.

The East Timorese desperately need outside help and the support of democratic nations, in particular the USA. No less than 78.5% of East Timorese voted for independence from Indonesia. Since then, Indonesia has subjected them to a terrible revenge. Militia and Indonesian military have been burning, shooting and looting their way through East Timor for days.

The latest estimate (given tonight by the Australian Defense Minister) is that 200,000

East Timorese have been forcibly evacuated to West Timor and elsewhere in the Indonesian archipelago. There is a systematic programme of destruction and genocide taking place—designed to wipe out the East Timorese elite and raze the infrastructure of East Timor to the ground.

This is a deliberate and carefully planned operation—the militia are not 'out of control', they are in fact firmly under control of the Indonesian military. East Timor is an Asian Kosovo: Indonesian-backed militia and Indonesian police and military are causing terror in East Timor even as you read this message. A gentle 80-year-old nun who helped care for Bishop Belo has been shot, Bishop Belo has fled the country, and there are numerous accounts of children and young men being hacked to death. The neck of a three-year-old child was wrung while his family watched.

I'm writing to you as an Australian citizen who is outraged at these events and who cannot believe that the world, and the US in particular, will do nothing to stop this holocaust. There is a desperate, urgent need for immediate outside help for the Timorese, a gentle Christian people, who believed that the world would stand by them.

Australia has committed 4,500 troops for a peacekeeping force but has so far failed to get any support from the US. There is a great sense of sadness, anger and frustration here about this. And I must tell you that there is great disappointment at the lack of US interest.

Australia has always stood by the side of the United States whenever the US has asked for support—in Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War. This is the first time in more than 50 years that we have asked for US help and we are getting nowhere. Our troops are on standby in Darwin and by coincidence there is a substantial number of US troops and several US warships also in Northern Australia. My guess is that a significant show of force and commitment by the US would turn the tide.

Please, Congressman, so what you can to help. Ask your colleagues and President Clinton to take a stand for democracy and against the evil, malevolent forces at work in East Timor today.

Yours sincerely,

IAN EVANS.

The following information is from the web site of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and was telecast on ABC-TV tonight (7:00 pm AEST, 9/9/99)

#### UN CONFIRMS MASSACRE AT SUAI

The United Nations has confirmed a massacre in which approximately 100 supporters of independence were shot or hacked to death by rampaging pro-Jakarta militia members earlier this week.

The victims were among more than 2,000 terrified people who had taken refuge from the militia for some weeks in a church in the western town of Suai. Three priests are believed to have been among those killed during the militia attack on Tuesday. The East Timorese head of the Catholic aid agency Caritas, Father Francisco Barreto, is also believed to have been killed.

In other reports, six nuns from the Canossian order were reportedly killed in the city of Baucau, 115 kilometers east of Dili.

A spokeswoman for Caritas in Australia said priests have been identified as supporting independence because pro-independence supporters had begun seeking shelter in church buildings in the past months.

#### REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2788.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentle-

woman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) be removed as a co-sponsor of H.R. 2788. She was inadvertently added as a cosponsor of this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

#### LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished majority leader for the purposes of inquiring about the schedule for the rest of the week and next week.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that we have completed legislative business for the week. The House will therefore not be in session tomorrow.

The House will next meet on Monday, September 13, at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and at 2:00 p.m. for legislative business. We will consider a number of bills under suspension of the rules, a list of which will be distributed to Members' offices tomorrow.

On Monday, we do not expect recorded votes until 6:00 p.m.

On Tuesday, September 14, and the balance of next week, the House will take up the following measures, all of which will be subject to rules: H.R. 417, the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act; H.R. 1551, the Civil Aviation Research and Development Authorization Act; H.R. 1655, the Department of Energy Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act; H.R. 2490, the Treasury and Postal Service Appropriations Conference Report; S. 1059, the National Defense Authorization Conference Report; and H.R. 1402, a bill regarding Federal Milk Marketing Orders.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday, September 17, no votes are expected after 2:00 p.m. I wish all of my colleagues safe travel back to their districts, and I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I have just a couple of questions for the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY).

Can the gentleman tell us the day in which campaign finance will be brought to the floor?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the campaign finance reform will be considered on Tuesday, and I might add we expect that to be a fairly lengthy debate and we would ex-

pect Members or advise Members to expect a late evening on Tuesday.

Mr. BONIOR. Does the gentleman expect a late evening other than Tuesday next week?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. We can tell the gentleman we will conclude business by 6:00 or so on Wednesday evening. The Hispanic Caucus has a very important dinner, and the schedule will accommodate to that dinner.

We expect that Thursday evening might possibly run a little late, but we certainly would hold to our 2:00 departure time on Friday.

Mr. BONIOR. I thank my colleague.

Finally, let me just ask my colleague that in August, before the recess, about 18 colleagues on the gentleman's side of the aisle signed a letter to the leadership asking that the minimum wage bill be brought up this fall before we adjourn for the year, and I am just wondering if the gentleman, who I know has a real fondness for the minimum wage bill, would enlighten us on when and if that will happen.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Yes, we are aware of this interest on the part of the Members on both sides of the aisle. We have key Members of the House working on that. I can only say to the gentleman he might expect something later in the year, but I have nothing more definite to say on that.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding, and have a good weekend.

#### ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1999

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

#### DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order

of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCOTT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### CHINA SHOULD NO LONGER RELY ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO BLOCK AMERICAN PRODUCTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, 5 months ago, the American agriculture sector celebrated the signing of groundbreaking market access agreements with China. In April 1999, Chinese Premier Zhou Rongji signed three bilateral agreements with the United States designed to open agricultural markets. These agreements concluded decades of discussions on sanitary and phytosyntax trade barriers which had locked American farmers out of Chinese markets.

Upon signature, China agreed to immediately begin implementing these agreements, permitting access to China's vast markets.

The larger issue of Chinese WTO accession was not resolved in April, but the side agreements were considered a significant victory for American farmers.

China has long relied on technical barriers to block American products. For more than 20 years, wheat from the Pacific Northwest has been banned because of unfounded concerns about TCK smut, a wheat fungus. The rest of the world recognizes that TCK poses no threat to human health and does not affect the quality of the product, yet China has maintained its ban for all of these years.

Meat producers have largely been shut out of the market because China has only allowed imports from five approved U.S. plants and all citrus growers have been locked out because of concerns about Mediterranean fruit flies in certain regions.

In signing the three agreements, China agreed to accept USDA certification for meat safety for U.S. exports of pork, beef and poultry; eliminate the

current comprehensive ban on citrus fruits and eliminate restrictions on the import of Pacific Northwest wheat. All future SPS disputes will be settled scientifically.

The potential consequences of the agreement were tremendous and touched most agriculture districts in the United States. But unfortunately, the disagreements remain only a distant unrealized potential. Three weeks ago, a member of my staff traveled to China to discuss implementation of these agreements. The Director General of American Affairs within the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Corporation indicated that China did not intend, did not intend, to implement the agreements until discussions were concluded on WTO accession.

Such a decision would be in direct contravention of the April agreement, which held that implementation would begin immediately. Agricultural producers should not be held hostage to WTO negotiations, and I expect China to uphold its bilateral commitments.

We as a Congress, we as a country, we as people who care about our agricultural sector, should expect China to uphold its bilateral commitments. This should serve as a test case if Congress discusses permanent normal trade relations with China later this year as a part of a WTO agreement. If China delays action on agricultural agreements that have previously been signed, it raises serious questions about the sincerity of other commitments to implement market access agreements.

The April draft WTO agreement would have resolved a wide range of other outstanding market access issues: trading rights, distribution, quotas, reliance on state trading companies and export subsidies. The U.S. Trade Representative did a great job in moving China toward a tariff based system, with extremely low tariff rates, but if China is unwilling to act on the Sanitary Phytosanitary Agreement, it seems likely that we may see continued reluctance on other aspects of any WTO agreement.

So I am sending a letter to President Zemin and President Clinton urging immediate implementation of the bilateral agricultural agreements, and I urge any Member of this body who represents producers of wheat, pork, poultry, beef or citrus, to join in the signing of this letter. With low prices already hurting our farm leaders across the country, we should not stand by and let them continue to be locked out of one of the largest markets in the world.

China should implement the side agreements; and it should do so immediately, and I would just say to my colleagues, this is an indication, I think, of disrespect for the agricultural sector in our country, which needs exports. We are fighting desperately to get our products into other countries; and now that we have reached this agreement,

it seems to me that China should follow through on what they previously agreed to in April of this year.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. NETHERCUTT. I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished gentleman from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT) for his message, for watching this issue so closely. It is important to the agricultural sector; and I think, as the gentleman points out, it is a real test of whether we can depend upon the People's Republic of China to implement their promises on trade. So I thank the gentleman for his diligence on this issue.

Mr. NETHERCUTT. I thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for his comments and his commitment to agriculture and his interest and his expertise in trade issues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. RUSH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### CHINESE ESPIONAGE AT OUR NATION'S WEAPONS LABORATORIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, prior to the district work period, I came to the floor to discuss an issue on the minds of many Americans as well as myself, the issue of Chinese espionage at our Nation's weapons laboratories. Over the last month, I spent time with the constituents of the third district of North Carolina, which I am proud to represent, and they gave me further confirmation that the American people are outraged over the loss of our sensitive national security information. But what my constituents expressed even greater concern with, as I am sure many across this country have, is the potential for continued loss of our sensitive nuclear technology.

□ 2045

In response to their concerns, I gave my word that I would do everything as a Member of Congress to ensure the accountability of those who have jeopardized the security of our Nation and protect our security information for the future, and, Mr. Speaker, I mean it too.

In July, I had the opportunity to meet with the former director of Safeguard and Security for the Department of Energy, Colonel Ed McCallum. The Office of Safeguards and Security governs protection of the Department of Energy's national security assets including nuclear weapons, nuclear material, highly classified information



and personal clearance. It also investigates security incidents involving the loss of nuclear materials and the unauthorized disclosure of classified information.

Colonel McCallum served as director of the office for 9 years under former Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary and then under current Secretary Bill Richardson. I first heard Colonel McCallum reveal his side of the nuclear spy scandal on the O'Reilly Factor on the Fox News Channel. Colonel McCallum was telling of how he and members of his staff made continued efforts, Mr. Speaker, to approach both O'Leary and Richardson to alert them to the lax security at our weapons labs and the need to take measures to prevent possible theft.

Mr. Speaker, Colonel McCallum reported that time after time he hit roadblocks in trying to bring this issue to the attention of both Secretaries. Neither O'Leary or Richardson took interest in his findings, and neither worked to tighten security. It is little surprise then to find out that security secrets were easily targeted by the Communist Chinese.

To prevent similar situations in the future my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON), and myself had called for a hearing to have Colonel McCallum and members of his staff brief the House Committee on Armed Services on the instances in which U.S. security was compromised. I am confident the information the colonel and his staff can provide will be critical in assisting Congress in its efforts to eliminate leakage of sensitive military secrets in the future.

Mr. Speaker, despite what the administration is willing to bet, the American people care about the loss of nuclear technology. In fact, after I had the opportunity to appear on the O'Reilly Factor to state my commitment to pursue this issue I have received a number of supportive letters from men and women across the country. One soldier in the Army wrote, and I quote:

I cannot figure out why there is so much apathy among the American people regarding this very serious threat to the security of our country.

I further quote:

There are a lot of people like myself who recognize the gravity of this situation and wish to see those responsible held fully accountable for their actions. I do not care how well the economy is doing. It won't mean a thing if China or one of its allies decides to launch a missile strike against this country.

That is from a member that served in the United States Army.

Mr. Speaker, a couple wrote another letter I want to share with you. It reads, and I quote:

This is a tragic road America is heading down. We are both grateful to you and others who are working with you to bring light, order, and some justice to what we see as a complete incompetence, lack of integrity, and dishonesty shown by this administration.

Mr. Speaker, I have a stack of letters just like these I have read to you to-

night. The message is clear. The American people want you and I to stand up to this administration.

We are a Congress. As a Congress, we must demand that those responsible are held accountable for compromising our national security, and we must work to prevent future leaks.

Mr. Speaker, I have offered my commitment and urge my colleagues and this Congress to join me in working to protect the security of every American citizen because America is special, and we must do everything we can to protect our national security of this Nation.

#### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues to urge this House to engage in a serious and honest debate on modest tax relief for the American people. Unfortunately, the Republican Tax Plan is nothing more than a thinly-veiled fundraising gimmick.

The Republican Tax Plan reminds me of the Shakespearean play, Hamlet. Hamlet's stepfather Claudius secretly kills Hamlet's father. Claudius later marries Hamlet's mother. Claudius attempts to get away with murder and don the ill-fitting cloak of kindness to young Hamlet. The Republican Tax Plan attempts to kill the spirit of the American people who cry out for sensible tax relief. But just as the Ghost the slain King sought to be heard, so does the spirit of the American people. We Democrats seek to honor this spirit.

The Republicans know that their risky tax plan has virtually no chance of passing. The President will certainly veto the Republican's \$800 billion risky tax scheme. If the Republican leadership has enough votes to override a veto why have they stalled for 35 days and counting to send their risky tax scheme to the President's desk?

The Republican leadership put on a road show this summer to sell their 1980's-style voodoo economics to the American people. But the American people realized that as we say in Texas, "That dog don't hunt." The GOP's risky tax plan would spend virtually all of the projected non-Social Security surpluses, would cause \$31.8 billion in cuts to Medicare within 5 years, and would cut \$56 billion out of crop insurance, education programs, child support enforcement programs, veterans education and readjustment.

Even Majority Leader DICK ARMEY admitted that the Republican tax plan is not an issue that resonates with voters. After a dismal showing with the American voters, Mr. ARMEY had this to say about the Republican's tax plan on CNN Inside Politics, August 18, 1999, "It is not an issue of the heart with the American people today. They want a tax cut, but they don't feel a need for one."

This is exactly right. The American people want some form of tax relief, but not an extreme risky scheme as proposed by the Republican leadership. Instead of saving the American people money, the Republican plan squanders the surplus on a fiscally irrespon-

sible \$3 trillion tax cut that would risk America's economic growth and explode the deficit.

The Democrats are prepared to work with the Republicans on a sensible alternative, but the Republican leadership refuses to put the best interest of the American people first. Why, you may ask? Chief GOP fundraiser, Representative TOM DAVIS responded thusly to the prospect of moderating the Republican's risky tax scheme in order to come closer to the Democrats plan for targeted tax relief as opposed to massive cuts:

"We (Republicans) think cutting a deal is not worth it. The issue has been a big money-raiser for us." (Washington Times, 9/6/99)

Instead, of partisan politics, the Republicans should work with the Democrats in a bipartisan way. We need to pursue a sound fiscal policy by using the surplus to pay down the national debt. We also need to continue on the path of debt reduction that will keep our interest rates low, sustain the current economic expansion, and allow the private sector to create good, high paying jobs.

Where the Republican leadership seems content to pander to their wealthy, special interest contributors, the Democrats seek to target our tax cuts to middle-class families. We need to help America's families to save some of their earnings for retirement and for their children's future and to make it easier for them to address the long-term care needs of their elderly parents. We urge our Republican colleagues to reject their leadership's risky tax scheme and opt for more pragmatic legislative tax relief.

Next week, the House will finally be permitted to debate the Shays-Meehan Bipartisan Campaign Finance Bill. The GOP will attempt to kill this bill through poison-pill amendments, but the Democrats will continue the fight for meaningful reform.

Rather than enacting irresponsible tax cuts that have no chance of being enacted into law, the Republicans should join the Democrats in enacting legislation that matters—legislation that will strengthen Medicare and provide prescription drug coverage, establish a comprehensive Patients Bill of Rights, help to keep our schools safe by enacting sensible gun-safety measures, and improve our education system through school construction and the reduction of class size.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KINGSTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### THE POLITICAL FUTURES OF INDONESIA AND EAST TIMOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises tonight to comment on the crisis in East Timor and its broader implications for the political future of Indonesia. This issue was a topic of a hearing of the Committee on International Relations' Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific which this Member chairs today. It was held jointly



with the subcommittee's Senate counterpart committee, and Indonesia and East Timor will undoubtedly be a major topic at the APEC summit President Clinton will be attending this weekend.

In the wake of the historic vote in East Timor, both Indonesia and East Timor face a future filled with portent. For Indonesia, the referendum comes at a time of very sensitive political maneuvering and a fragile economic recovery.

When the subcommittee last held hearings on Indonesia on May 12, we were anxiously awaiting the June 7 national election results. Despite some violence, a very slow vote count and a limited amount of election irregularities that election was nonetheless judged by the international community to be a success. It buoyed optimism about Indonesia's ability to overcome its profound political and economic crises. However, that June election also created new complexities. No one party achieved a majority, and, in fact, the opposition, PDIP led by Megawati Sukarnoputri won a plurality of the vote. Therefore, for the first time in modern Indonesian history political coalitions will be needed to form in order to elect a new president, form a new government, carry out further economic and political reforms, address the subject of rescinding the 1976 law which integrated East Timor into Indonesia as its 27th province and address separatist sentiments in other parts of Indonesia like the province of Aceh in northern Sumatra. Indeed this is a new experience for these relatively immature political forces in a democratic Indonesia. How they carry out these responsibilities will determine the legitimacy of the new Indonesian government as viewed by the eyes of the Indonesian public and by the international community.

Of course, the most obvious and immediate task is the crisis in East Timor. After years of Indonesian intransigence, President Habibie took bold steps towards resolving this long-standing problem. In January, he seemingly brushed aside the reservations of the military and others in the Indonesian society and surprised the world by offering the people of East Timor an opportunity to determine their own future through the ballot box. Many of us were encouraged by this bold and positive development. There was perhaps a general sense of guarded optimism prompted by the assurances of President Habibie and Armed Forces Chief General Wiranto that Jakarta would maintain order and create an environment conducive for a fair and safe election, but that proved not to be a realistic assessment. Despite increasing violence and intimidation by Indonesian militarily supported militia in the recent Timorese elections, a record 98.6 percent of registered voters turned out to vote with 78 percent of them choosing independence.

The will of the East Timorese people is clear and overwhelming. It is evident

by the truly horrific events in East Timor over the past week that the Indonesian government and particularly the Indonesian military has been deliberately unwilling or perhaps in some cases unable to uphold their responsibilities to provide peace and security.

It must be emphasized that this is Indonesia's responsibility. Indonesia demanded this responsibility from the United Nations, and the international community entrusted it to Indonesia. It is reported the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan has made very strong representations to the Indonesian government about their obligations and the negative consequences Jakarta could face from the international community for jeopardizing the integrity and the subsequent implementation of the expressed citizens' desires of this U.N.-sponsored election. The United Nations General Assembly should do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I will report more on these events after the weekend and after we complete work on a resolution that we intend to offer on a bipartisan basis early next week.

#### AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE RENTING THEIR CURRENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. METCALF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk briefly about money. Everybody is interested in money. My wife asked me: If you know so much about money, how come we do not have very much? But I would like to talk about money this evening.

Did you know that we pay rent on our money; the cash we use, we pay rent on it? It costs the American people \$100 per person per year to rent our cash; that is, the paper money, from the Federal Reserve.

Now, the Federal Reserve gets the money, it just does not spend that money or keep it. They return it to the Federal Treasury. That means that the American people are paying a tax on our money in circulation for the privilege of using Federal Reserve notes. In reality, this money is paid to the Fed by the Treasury to pay the interest on the U.S. bonds that back our money.

This is a foolish system when the U.S. Treasury could issue our currency directly without debt and without interest as they issue our coins. Most people do not know that our coins are minted by the Treasury, essentially spent into circulation, and the U.S. Treasury makes a neat profit on them. But when we issue cash, we go further into debt. When the U.S. Government issues paper cash, they go further into debt because bonds are created to back the cash, and thus the debt increases.

With a currency we go into debt, but it makes a profit when coins are placed in circulation. This is truly a system that defies logic, and we should issue our coins or issue our cash as we issue our coins.

Here is a simple way to accomplish that; this is not complex, this is not rocket science. Congress only needs to pass legislation requiring the Treasury to print and issue U.S. Treasury currency in the same amount, in the same denominations, of the present Federal Reserve notes. No change in the money supply. The Treasury would issue these U.S. notes through the banks and at the same time withdrawing a like amount of Federal Reserve notes.

As these Federal Reserve notes are collected by the U.S. Treasury, they must be returned to the Federal Reserve and essentially to redeem the over \$400 billion of U.S. interest bearing U.S. Treasury bonds now held by the Fed. So the Fed holds the bonds. We can take the U.S. currency and exchange it for those bonds. Over a couple of years we will have U.S. currency circulating instead of Federal Reserve notes, and the U.S. debt would be reduced by over \$400 billion.

That sounds too simple. Well, it is simple. This is not rocket science. There is no appreciable down side, and I expect to discuss this issue a lot in the future just because somebody needs to take a look at how our money was issued and allow us to avoid paying that \$27 billion a year interest just to rent our currency from the Federal Reserve.

#### HMO REFORM UPPERMOST ON MINDS OF AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the issue of HMO reform has become one of the most important issues on the minds of Americans today, and I can certainly tell you that from the forums and the people that I met and talked to during the August break that we recently held with the House of Representatives. I had a number of forums in my district that were specifically about HMO reform where we talked about the Patients' Bill of Rights and what some of us are trying to do in the House of Representatives to reform HMOs and to end some of the abuses. And I found overwhelmingly that at my general forums or my forums that were specific to HMO reform that people felt that the need to address the abuses of HMOs and managed care was the number one issue on the minds of my constituents. And we know that polling around the country amongst Democrats, Republicans, and Independents shows that that is certainly the case as well.

There have been also I should mention a number of front page articles in the leading newspapers, the New York Times, the Washington Post on the fevered pitch, if you will, that the debate over managed care reform has assumed on Capitol Hill, and it is also assumed

I would say a clear and identifiable framework.

The debate is now one between supporters of managed care reform on the one hand, mostly Democrats, and some Republicans and the Republican leadership on the other hand. The Republican leadership which with the insurance industry are fighting tooth and nail to undermine the various managed care reform proposals that have been introduced either by Democrats, by Republicans or on a bipartisan basis.

The issue of HMO reform has reached the dimensions it has because patients are being abused within managed care organizations. It is just common sense. Many people come up to me because they have had problems with HMOs where they felt that common sense would dictate that they should be able to go to an emergency room or they should be able to have particular treatment or stay in the hospital a few extra days, and they are told that they cannot.

Patients today lack basic elementary protections from abuse, and these abuses are occurring because insurance companies and not doctors are dictating which patients can get what services under what circumstances. Within managed care organizations, HMOs, the judgment of doctors is increasingly taking a back seat to the judgment of the insurance companies. Medical necessity is being shunned aside by the desire of bureaucrats to make an extra buck, and people are literally dying because they are not getting the medical attention they need; and ironically enough, they are in theory paying for it in their premiums.

□ 2100

I cannot emphasize enough, Mr. Speaker, how many times during the break, during the August recess, that people came into my district office complaining about abuses related to HMOs and managed care.

Now, because of the importance of this issue, there are a number of legislative proposals that have been introduced to give patients the protections they deserve. I have been on the floor many times talking about the Democrat Caucus' Health Care Task Force, which I cochair; and together with the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. DINGELL] and most Democratic Members here in the House, we have introduced legislation which would provide patients with a comprehensive set of protections from managed care abuses. This is the Patients' Bill of Rights, as it is called. It is not an attempt to destroy managed care, it is an attempt to basically improve it and to make it better.

I cannot emphasize that enough. During the forums I had during the break, I had actually people from an insurance company who sold insurance policies for managed care, and I suggested to them over and over again and explained to them that those of us who want reform are not against managed

care. Managed care is here to stay. We know that it saves money; we know there are positive values to it. But on the other hand, the abuses have to be corrected.

Now, I wanted to say that what happened just before the August break in that first week of August when we were last in session was very significant. At that time and a few weeks prior to that the Republican leadership was saying they were willing to bring some kind of managed care reform to the floor and let us vote on it, up or down. However, they ultimately decided not to allow that, not to do that.

Because of that, there were Republican Members, and I will mention the two leaders, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NORWOOD] and the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. GANSKE], both Republicans, both health care professionals, who decided they were going to join together. Because they could not get a vote on the floor on managed care reform from the Republican leadership, they would join together and bring some of the Republican colleagues over to help most of the Democrats who had sponsored and put forward the Patients' Bill of Rights.

So just before the break, it was announced there would be a new bipartisan bill sponsored by these Members, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. DINGELL] and the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NORWOOD], the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. DINGELL] being our Democrat and ranking member on the Committee on Commerce, and the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NORWOOD] and the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. GANSKE], also Republican members of the Committee on Commerce; and we would put together a new bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, which is very similar really to the Democratic bill that came out of our Democratic Health Care Task Force and that we as Democrats have been talking about for the last year or more, and we now have 20 Republicans who have agreed to cosponsor this new bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights.

That was a major achievement. There are now a majority of Members of this House on both sides of the aisle that are willing to say that they want the Patients' Bill of Rights brought to the floor and are willing to cosponsor the bill.

Unfortunately, nothing has really changed in terms of the Republican leadership. The Patients' Bill of Rights, this new bipartisan one, does not enjoy the support of the Republican leadership. In fact, if we are to believe, if you will, what we read in the newspaper, it is not just the Patients' Bill of Rights that the Republican leadership opposes. They appear to be opposed to the larger notion of managed care reform. They are simply not willing to cross the insurance industry in order to give patients better protections and doctors greater power over medical choices.

I would like to point out that the GOP leadership's opposition to the new

bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights is not exclusive to the House. In the Senate, Senator NICKLES recently lambasted the American Medical Association for supporting the Patients' Bill of Rights. During the break the American Medical Association, I should mention, came out in support, unconditional support, of this new bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights. Yet Senator NICKLES said he was shocked that they would do it, and he suggested that the AMA's support of the Patients' Bill of Rights would jeopardize their relationship with the Republican Party.

I have to point out that it is not just the AMA, it is not just the AMA representing doctors, it is almost every health care professional organization that has now come out in support of the Patients' Bill of Rights. We have over 100 patients, medical health care and consumer groups that have announced their support for the bill, and I think the problem with the GOP leadership, the Republican leadership, is that rather than hear the voices of the vast majority of their constituents and the overwhelming voices of the medical and the health care professionals and the consumer groups that say they support the Patients' Bill of Rights, instead the Republican leadership just looks to the special interests, the HMOs and insurance companies, and only hears their voices to decide what they as Republican leadership should do.

Basically what we have, now that we have come back into session, and we will be in session for most of the fall, is essentially a scene or a showdown, if you will, between the supporters of the Patients' Bill of Rights, bipartisan, and the Republican leadership. With very few legislative days left in the 106th Congress, those who support patient protection believe it is increasingly important that everyone come together and send a strong message to the GOP leadership about getting the Patients' Bill of Rights to the floor for a vote.

I would bet any money that if the Republican leadership brought the new bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights to the floor of this House, it would pass overwhelmingly, so that is why they are not doing it, because they are afraid that would in fact happen.

But there is widespread agreement in Congress for ensuring with this bill that medical decisions are being made by doctors based on medical need and not by company bureaucrats whose primary concern is profit margin. I believe that if we continue to agitate on a bipartisan basis now to bring this bill to the floor, we will eventually have success.

Now I wanted to point out, if I could this evening, what the Republican leadership did during the break in concert with the HMOs or the insurance companies, with these special interests, to try to kill the Patients' Bill of Rights and those who might be interested in

supporting it, again, both Democrats and Republicans.

I am just reading, if I could, or making mention of an article that was in Congress Daily, which is a publication that circulates on Capitol Hill. This was an article that was in the Congress Daily during the break, Thursday, August 19.

It says: "Insurers business target Norwood Dingell supporters." They are again making reference to the bipartisan bill. "Health insurers, health plan and business groups today unveiled the advertising campaign they will target at States and House districts where members have cosponsored or are leaning towards supporting managed care reform. Health Insurance Association of America President Charles Chip Kahn said cosponsors of the bipartisan managed care bill authored by Representative Charles Norwood, Republican of Georgia, and Commerce ranking member John Dingell, Democrat of Michigan, will rue the day," this is a quote, "will rue the day they decide to endorse it. During the next two weeks, the HIAA will spend \$250,000 airing 60-second radio ads that will run in Buffalo, Elmira and New York City, New York, Miami and West Palm Beach, Florida, Chattanooga and Knoxville, Tennessee, Philadelphia and Casper, Wyoming, where GOP Representative Barbara Cubin is a cosponsor of the Norwood-Dingell plan. Including HIAA's advertising campaign over the next two weeks, Kahn said, health plans and business groups opposing managed care bills will spend more than \$1 million working towards a cacophony of criticism of the bills. The health benefits coalition, a group of employer-based organizations opposing the managed care bills, is ramping up its spending for the last two weeks of the break, said an official with one of the groups. The coalition will launch television and heavy radio ads and heavy grassroots pressure against about 35 Republicans who either have signed or might sign on to the Norwood-Dingell plan. The ads are pretty tough and they are intended to provoke a backlash, the official said. We are going after members who are soft but gettable."

Basically what they are doing is spending their time during the break, spending money, trying to persuade, particularly Republicans in this case, not to cosponsor the now bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights.

It is not just this group, the HMOs. "The American Association of Health Plans will launch a TV ad campaign aimed at 60 House Members, said spokesman John Murray. The ads will target Norwood-Dingell cosponsors as well as House Members still on the fence. Murray said, we are going to spend whatever it takes."

How do you like that? This is the problem that we face, the money that the special interests want to spend, and they are working with the Republican leadership, even against Republican

Members who feel that they want to cosponsor the Patients' Bill of Rights and are supporters of what is good for the average American. "The business roundtable also will launch radio ads during the remainder of the August recess," their spokesman said.

Well, just to give you an example, it is not just during the recess. It continues this week in Congress Daily, which, again, is a publication that every Member of the House gets on a regular basis. Every day this week there has been a full page ad which was just sort of a white sheet, and in the middle of it there is this warning, like the kind of warning you would get on a cigarette package, that says, "Warning: The Dingell-Norwood Patients' Bill of Rights could be hazardous to your health care."

It does not really explain why. There is some fine print at the end that tries to explain why, which does not really make any sense. But this advertising campaign continues, and I have no doubt that it will continue throughout the fall and way beyond to try to target and dissuade not only Democrats, but, even more importantly, now Republicans, who want to sign on to the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights.

I mentioned before though and I will mention again that supporters, both Democrats and Republicans, of the Patients' Bill of Rights can take solace in the fact that the average citizen, as well as all the health care professional organizations, pretty much now are solidly behind our HMO reform.

Another thing that came out within the last month that I thought was particularly interesting was a survey that showed just how much managed care frustrates physicians and how physicians and health care professionals in general feel that they cannot really properly take care of their patients because of the abuses of managed care.

This was also in Congress Daily, and it says, talking about this new survey, that nearly 90 percent of physicians say health plans have denied their patients recommended care during the last two years, and in some cases those denials occur as often as every week.

The survey was released by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health. Kaiser Foundation President Drew Altman expressed surprise about the pervasiveness of problems reported between providers and insurers. "Some tension is to be expected," Altman said, "but the degree of conflict reflected in this survey suggests we are in a new world, and it is hard to argue it is good for the health care system."

According to the survey, the most common denials were for prescription drugs. Sixty-one percent of physicians said they had a patient experience a denial weekly or monthly with regard to prescription drugs. Denial of diagnostic tests, 42 percent of patients have been denied a test weekly or monthly. Forty-two percent of the patients said that they had had some kind of denial,

weekly or monthly; hospitals stays, 31 percent weekly or monthly; referrals to specialists, 29 percent weekly or monthly. This is the physicians relating what happened to their patients.

Depending on the problem, between one-third and two-thirds of physicians said a denial resulted in a somewhat or very serious decline in patients' health. So, again, we are talking about what is happening in the real world. We are talking about the abuses and the problems that people have on a regular basis.

The physicians, according to that survey, see these problems, see what is happening to their patients, and feel it is having a really negative impact on the quality and delivery of health care that people receive in this country.

□ 2115

Now, before I conclude tonight, I wanted to spend some time talking briefly about our new bipartisan approach, our new Patients' Bill of Rights, which, as I said, is supported by almost every Democrat and at least about 20 Republicans at this point, but continues to be opposed by the Republican leadership. That is why we have not been able to get it to the floor.

If I could just explain some of the commonsense proposals that are part of this new bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, I have a summary that basically divides it into access to care, information about care, protecting the relationship between the physician and ourselves as patients, and the basic accountability.

I will start with the issue of access to care, because I think for most people that is the biggest problem, the denial of different kinds of treatments or hospital stays or equipment that they experience.

Most important, we try to address the problem with emergency services. Individuals should be assured that if they have an emergency, those services will be covered by the plan, that they do not have to call before they can go to an emergency room if they feel that they do not have the time to do that because their health is at risk; that they do not have to go to a particular emergency room rather than the one that is closest to them because they feel that they do not have time to go to the one that is further away.

The bipartisan bill says that individuals must have access to emergency care without prior authorization in any situation that a prudent layperson would regard as an emergency. So if you as the average person think that when you have chest pains that you should be able to go to the local emergency room, the HMO cannot say you have to go further away or you need prior authorization.

Let me talk about specialty care. Patients with special conditions must have access to providers who have the requisite expertise to treat their problem. Today in this day and age people increasingly have to go to specialists

for particular problems. Increasingly what we find is that patients in HMOs have a problem getting referral to a specialist, or there is not a specialist within the HMO network who can take care of their problem.

This bipartisan bill, our bipartisan bill, allows for referrals for patients to go out of the plan's network, doctors who are not in the network, for specialty care at no extra cost if there is no appropriate provider available in the network for covered services.

Chronic care referrals. For individuals who are seriously ill or require continued care by specialists, plans under our bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, plans must have a process for selecting a specialist as a gatekeeper for their condition to access necessary specialty care without impediments.

In other words, if you have a chronic condition, this specialist you can go to on a regular basis, he becomes almost your primary care provider so you do not have to constantly go back to the primary care provider to continue to be able to see the specialist.

Our bipartisan bill provides direct access to OB-GYN care and services. With regard to children, the bill ensures that the special needs of children are met, including access to pediatric specialists and the ability for children to have a pediatrician as their primary care provider.

Again, continuity of care. I have found a lot of people during the break and who continue to complain to me about how if their doctor is dropped by the network, that all of a sudden they are not with the physician that they have used for a long time. Under our bipartisan bill, patients are protected against disruptions in care because we set up guidelines for the continuation of treatment in circumstances where the doctor is no longer part of the network, for example.

There are special protections for pregnancy, terminal illness, and individuals on a waiting list for surgery.

Let me also talk about the drug formularies. One of the biggest issues with regard to HMOs is that HMOs oftentimes provide for prescription drugs, which is an important part of why people sign up for an HMO, in many cases. What we are saying with our bill, with our bipartisan bill, is that prescription medication should not be one-size-fits-all. If a plan uses a drug formulary, beneficiaries must be able to access medications that are not on the formulary when the prescribing physician says that that is necessary.

Again, what we are doing is leaving this decision up to the physician because he or she is in the best position to know what is best for the patient.

Choice of plans. People want to, in certain circumstances, to be able to go outside the network and choose a physician who is not part of the HMO network. Choice is a major component of the bipartisan bill. It says that individuals can elect a point of service option when their health insurance plan does

not offer access to non-network providers.

What that means is that in the beginning if you are working and your employer provides health care, the employer has to allow you to elect a point of service option, where you can go outside the doctors in the network. But you have to make that decision initially when you sign up for your health care plan, for your HMO, and you also have to pay the extra cost of going outside the network.

So again, we are not destroying the basic idea of managed care, which is that it is a closed panel network of physicians and health care providers, but we are saying this for people who want to in the beginning, they can choose the point of service option.

Those are the access issues that are primarily addressed by our bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, but I would like to now talk about the information issue, briefly, because many people are concerned that they do not really know what they are getting into when they sign up for an HMO.

What we say is that we require managed care plans to provide important information, and that is information that allows them to understand their health plan's policies, procedures, benefits, and other requirements.

I would like now to go into the issue of grievances and appeals, because one or really the hallmark, if you will, of the Patients' Bill of Rights and the whole effort towards Medicare reform is to make sure that the decision about what type of care you are going to get, the decision about what is medically necessary for you as a patient, is based not on what the health insurance company wants and what the health insurance plans want to cover, but rather is based on what your physician, the health care professional, thinks that you should be provided with.

So what we are basically saying, and the thread that sort of runs through the whole Patients' Bill of Rights, is that the issue of medical necessity should be decided by the physician and the patient, not by the insurance company, and that if there has been a denial of care, then that decision to appeal that denial of care and overturn it, if necessary, should be made by an independent group not appointed and not under the control of the HMO, and that ultimately you should be able to go to court if you are not satisfied, as well.

What we have in our new bipartisan bill is it basically lays out criteria for a good utilization review program, physician participation in the development of raw criteria, administration by appropriately qualified professionals, and timely decisions within 14 days for ordinary care up to 28 days if the plan requests additional information, and the ability to appeal these decisions.

So we want the health care professionals to be involved in making the decision of what kind of care you get and that there is a timely appeal if you

have been denied that care by the insurance company.

There are really two processes in terms of the grievances and appeals. One is internal and one is external. Patients should be able to appeal plan decisions to deny, delay, or otherwise overrule doctor-prescribed care and have those concerns addressed in a timely manner. So we require an appeals system that is expedient, particularly in situations that threaten the life or health of the patient.

Other than the internal appeal, though, there also should be the opportunity for external review if the health care plan ultimately says no, we are not going to allow you this care. What we say is that the health care plan has to pay the cost of the external review, and that the decision by the external reviewer is binding on the health care plan.

If a plan refuses to comply with the external reviewer's determination, the patient may go to Federal court to enforce the decision. I will get a little more into that a little later, about if you are denied through the regular administrative process, that you can go to court.

Let me just talk a little bit, though, before I get to that ultimate issue of accountability, talk a little bit about how we try to protect the physician-patient relationship.

One of the things that is most shocking to my constituents is when they come in and tell me that their physician is not allowed to tell them about a particular type of medical care or treatment that the physician thinks that they should be receiving.

We call it basically the gag rule; in other words, the HMO tells the physician that he or she cannot tell the patient about a procedure that they will not cover. So if the plan will not cover a particular procedure, equipment, operation, then the physician is basically forbidden from talking about it to the patient.

That is ridiculous. Consumers should have the right to know about their treatment options. What we say in our bill is that we prohibit plans from gagging doctors and from retaliating against physicians who advocate on behalf of their patients. It basically protects the physicians in these situations from retribution. It also prevents plans from providing inappropriate incentives to physicians to limit medically necessary services so that physicians do not have a financial incentive, which they often do now with HMOs, to not recommend certain services.

With regard to physician selection, which physicians are in a plan, the insurers cannot discriminate on the basis of a license in selection of a physician. In other words, they cannot discriminate based on license, location, or patient base.

The HMOs can basically decide which doctors are going to be in the network, but if the doctor meets objective standards with regard to licensure, then

they cannot say that his particular license is not acceptable. They also cannot discriminate because of the location of the physician or the patient base of the physician.

With regard to payment of claims under our bill, health plans should operate efficiently and pay providers in a timely manner. The bill would require that claims be paid in accordance with Medicare guidelines for prompt payment, because what we have found is a lot of the HMOs do not pay the physicians. They delay payment in order to save money, or to save the interest rate.

We also have a provision for paperwork simplification in order to minimize the confusion and complicated paperwork that providers physicians face. This bill would require that the HMO industry develop a standard form for physicians to use in submitting a claim.

The last thing I wanted to mention this evening is this whole issue of accountability. The main thing that the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights does is to provide accountability if you have been denied care. I talked about the internal and external review, that it has to be done by a group that is not beholden to the HMO.

But I think that beyond that, there has to be the ability to go to court and sue for damages if all else has failed. I think many people realize, although a lot of my constituents still do not realize it, that under existing Federal law called ERISA, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, State laws are basically preempted. So, therefore, if you are in an ERISA plan, which is basically a plan where your employer is self-insured, any kind of self-insured plan, which millions and millions of Americans particularly in large companies fall under these types of self-insured plans, because that is what larger employers tend to do, they fall under ERISA and Federal preemption, which means that the HMO cannot be sued.

That makes no sense. The HMOs, as we discussed this evening, are basically making medical decisions. If they make a decision about what kind of care you can receive or how long you can stay in a hospital, for example, and they make the wrong decision, then they should be held accountable. You should be able to sue them.

Our bipartisan bill would remove the ERISA preemption and allow patients to hold health plans accountable according to State laws, so if the State law allows it you would be able to sue and you are not preempted by the Federal law.

The one thing that we did do, and this was I think important and makes sense, is that the new bipartisan bill says that if a plan, if a health insurance, if an HMO complies with an external reviewer's decision, they cannot be held liable for punitive damages. So if when you go to an administrative review the decision is to deny you care

and then you appeal and you go to court, the court decides that the independent review was wrong, you cannot receive punitive damages, because in that case the HMO did in fact act in good faith and go to the external review process.

□ 2130

The other thing I wanted to mention because I know that part of the criticism, if you will, that the insurance companies are making in their advertisement about the Patients' Bill of Rights, they say that employers can be sued, and that because employers can be sued, then a lot of employers will simply not cover their employees; and the number of people who have health insurance will decline because of the Patients' Bill of Rights.

Well, I want to explain and emphatically state that the Patients' Bill of Rights, the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, which I have been discussing tonight, does not in any way create liability for the employer.

In the bill, we have a provision that protects employers from liability when they were not involved in the treatment decision. It explicitly states that discretionary authority does not include a decision about what benefits to include in the plan, a decision not to address a case while an external appeal is pending, or a decision to provide an extra contractual benefit.

What that essentially translates to mean is that there is nothing in our bill that would in any way extend the liability of the employer and allow them to be sued because of the denial of care other than whatever the existing law is right now.

I wanted to mention one more thing before I close, and that is what we constantly get from the Republican leadership in opposing the Patients' Bill of Rights, the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, and what we constantly get from the insurance companies and the HMOs in their attacks and their ads and their multimillion dollar campaign against the Patients' Bill of Rights, I think could be basically summed up in what the Health Insurance Association of America put in sort of the fine print in this ad that was in Congress Daily that I mentioned before.

It says that "the Patients' Bill of Rights currently being considered will cause us a lot of unpleasant side effects, more red tape and more regulations that the patients can expect, and patients will end up paying the bill. Health care costs would increase."

They basically stress the fact that what we will see with this Patients' Bill of Rights is a huge increase of costs and that that will make it more difficult for both individual as well as employers to provide health insurance. Nothing can be further from the truth.

The reality is probably best summed up by making reference to the State of Texas. About 2 years ago, the State of Texas passed a law that has been in effect, I should say, for about 2 years,

which is very similar to the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights that I have been advocating tonight.

As a result of that Texas law which allowed people to bring suit, the number of lawsuits that have actually been brought within the last month, over that 2-year period, only two lawsuits have been brought because of the change in the Texas law that provides patient protections.

In addition to that, it was estimated that the premiums have gone up about 30 cents a month during the 2-year period that the Texas patient protections have been in effect. That 30-cent increase could have occurred because of inflation or whatever, but the bottom line is it is insignificant. Any consumer, any constituent of mine would gladly pay an extra 30 cents a month to have the kind of protections that are in place here.

I think that in their advertising campaign the HMOs said that health care costs could increase as much as \$200 per family, forcing small employers to drop their health insurance all together. The Texas experience shows very emphatically that that is simply not true. There really is not any significant added cost, because what the Patients' Bill of Rights does is to provide for prevention.

Now that the HMOs cannot allow the kind of abuses now that they are threatened with the right to sue and the external review, they take the proper precautions; and lawsuits don't occur, and costs really do not go up significantly.

So I am going to end this evening, Mr. Speaker, but I wanted to point out that the new session has begun. The fall session has begun. Those of us who advocate the Patients' Bill of Rights are going to be out there on a daily basis saying that we want the Republican leadership to bring this bill to the floor.

We have a majority of Members of the House that now support us. Most of the Democrats. At least 20 Republicans. I think the number of Republicans are going to continue to rise, because they realize, Members of this House realize in a bipartisan basis that this kind of reform is needed.

I am just calling again on the Republican leadership and will continue to call on them to allow this bill to come to the floor. If it does, we will pass it overwhelmingly, and we will finally see protections within the context of HMOs that Americans are crying out for.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE HEROES OF THE GRAND JUNCTION SHOOTING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, as many of you know, my district is in the

State of Colorado. I represent the Third Congressional District of the State of Colorado, which is essentially the mountains of Colorado. My home is Grand Junction, Colorado.

Over the weekend, my home in Grand Junction Colorado got a very, very special gift, a gift of heroes. Over the weekend, we had two of our citizens who lost their lives in an unfortunate failed attempt to save another person's life.

These two individuals, Hobert Franklin, Jr. and David Gilcrease, both were individuals of normal working people. Nothing really set them out from the crowd until that moment of the call for courage. At that moment, both of these individuals stepped forward at the expense of their lives to try and save this other life.

The incident was a very violent incident. It was a domestic dispute. It took place in a grocery store in Grand Junction, in fact, the grocery store that my wife shops in, a grocery store that a lot of my neighbors shop in.

A man went in and grabbed a woman by her hair, dragged her out of the store, he had a gun in his hand, took her into the parking lot. When Hobert Franklin saw that happening, he ran out of the store to go to her aid.

Now, what we need to keep in mind with both of these individuals is that they had a very clear choice to make. There were lots of directions they could run. There were lots of directions that they could go away from the assailant. But Hobert decided not to do that. Hobert ran at the assailant to help the victim, and the assailant shot him dead.

David in the meantime saw what happened to Hobert. So he then knew that this guy was going to kill somebody. He just did kill somebody, in fact. He had an opportunity as well to go a different direction. Nobody could criticize the people that went different directions. This was a very terrifying incident.

But at that special moment, David decided that he had to intercede and stop this event from occurring. He ran towards the fellow, the assailant. The assailant raised the weapon at him. David puts his hands up. The assailant put his hand down. David backed off. He went back around the van.

I have got tell my colleagues about David. Do my colleagues know how much David weighed? David weighed 90 pounds. Ninety pounds. Think about it. Ninety pounds.

He came back around the van, and he tackled the assailant. Now, he is a tough guy, David, but he was not that tough. He was not that strong to take the assailant and knock him out of commission, so to speak. So the assailant knocked David off his back, and he turned around, and he killed David in cold blood.

Now, what is special about these two people is that David who was a father, by the way, of two young boys, terrific young children, and his wife Kim, his

last words from David, as witnessed by the people who were trying to save his life was, "Yes, Jesus is my savior."

He was a small man, but as they said at his service yesterday, he was a giant when it comes to heart and to will. This small-framed man, and I am quoting from Bob Carter who read a poem in David's memory, "This small-framed man was the biggest man my heart has been blessed with knowing."

David was a wonderful guy. He blessed Grand Junction with his gift of heroism this last weekend.

Hobert, they talk about he is 50 years old. They said his half a century of life really boiled down to one defining moment; that is what his nephew told people at the service on Wednesday. "No matter what he did, he will be remembered most for what he did in the last few moments of his life," Travis Coley told the gathering at the service.

Coley is in the seminary or just graduated from the seminary. Hobert was his uncle, and this is the first funeral service that Pastor Coley was to give.

Franklin had two sons, John and T.J. I got to meet both John and T.J. My colleagues would be very proud of these young men. They are very proud of their father because they knew, at that last defining moment, their father made a decision, a decision to try and save somebody else's life even though it probably meant imminent death for him.

Franklin is also survived by his wife Judy, his father and his brother and his sister. Franklin, too, blessed Grand Junction with that gift of heroism.

So as we go about in our every day lives, I just ask, because throughout our country we have a lot of good people out there, we have a lot of people of strong character, we have a lot of people that are the core of what makes this country great, and these are two of those individuals, and tonight in front of all of my colleagues and in front of all of the people of the United States of America, this country pays its due respect.

#### ISSUES FACING AMERICA

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I have a number of different topics that I would like to cover this evening. I think probably one of them that is at the heart of a lot of debate that has been taking place here regards taxes. The gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is here to comment on that.

I yield to the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE).

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that I think probably that the character of a lot of the people in his Congressional District is much like that of those that I represent in the State of South Dakota. Understanding that his district is very much like mine, very rural, and the gentlemen that he described this evening I think probably my colleagues would find them walking down the main streets in many places across

South Dakota as well. It is a great privilege and honor to represent people with that kind of character.

I presume that, during the course of the August break, the gentleman from Colorado, like I did, had the opportunity to travel across his district. I had the opportunity to visit, on one particular trip, 36 counties across my State culminating with almost a week at the South Dakota State fair.

During the course of those travels, I heard about a lot of topics, one of which, of course, in my State is agriculture which is in desperate straits. I hope that this institution will, the Congress, come together on a solution for that problem to address many of the concerns, many of the very serious problems structurally that are occurring in agriculture today.

I hope that before the session is out that we will pass disaster relief assistance, and market loss assistance, that we will pass mandatory price reporting, Federal legislation to that effect, that we will pass crop insurance reform, which is desperately needed to make sure that producers have the risk management tools that will allow them to succeed in the current market place, and other issues that I think will come up, one of which is market concentration.

One of the things that I heard repeatedly in my travels across South Dakota is this increasing concentration in the agricultural industry. We are seeing it, whether it is grain buyers, whether it is livestock packers, whether it is soybean crushers, flour mills, you name it, there are fewer and fewer buyers of raw agricultural products in this country. It is having a profound and very serious effect on producers across South Dakota and I think across this entire country, and it is an issue which needs the attention of the United States Congress.

The other thing that I heard, like a lot of people, I think, traveling across this country and traveling across my State and others who traveled in their districts, was this surplus and talking about how do we deal with what is this \$3 trillion plus projected surplus. I am sure the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) has heard a lot of about that as well. As I was traveling across South Dakota, it was an issue that came up frequently. We had an opportunity to talk about how do we do it.

First of all, I think a lot of people are very skeptical that there is a surplus in the first place. Frankly, they ought to be.

□ 2145

I think that myself. I have a hard time dealing with trillions of dollars, billions of dollars, even millions of dollars. So we have to break it down into terms I think that all of us can understand.

But the reality is that for a lot of reasons we are projecting over the course of the next 10 years about \$3.1 trillion in surpluses. And everybody

says, well, what caused that. I think it was a lot of things. I think it was the fact that, before I arrived on the scene, think the Republican Congress passed welfare reform; that there are 3.3 million more Americans working today and paying taxes; the fact that we were able to enact tax relief legislation in 1997, which I think has increased government revenues and lowering the capital gains rate. People took realizations, paid taxes on those realizations and increased government revenues.

I also think that control over federal spending has something to do with it. Since we assumed power here in the Congress, we have gotten tighter control over federal spending. And I think that fiscal responsibility has helped generate some of the surpluses. And, obviously, monetary management at the Federal Reserve. But in the end it is the hard work of the American people that has generated these surpluses. And so when we have this debate about how to best use these surpluses, we have to remember that it is their money we are talking about.

Again, trying to break this down into denominations that people can understand, \$3 trillion is a lot. But if we broke it down into, say \$4, and there has been a lot of discussion about how to do this, but what our plan does, and frankly this has been misrepresented and confused, and the other side has tried I think in many respects to mislead people about what this is all about, but, frankly, if the surplus was \$4, we are taking \$3 out of the \$4 and setting it aside for Social Security and Medicare and to pay down the federal debt.

One of the things I heard in South Dakota over and over again is why do we not just pay down the federal debt. I think that is an admirable quality and one, I think, that speaks well of the people of South Dakota that they are interested in fiscal responsibility and making good on their debts. The reality is that \$3 out of the \$4, if we think of the surplus as being \$4, 3 of the 4 goes to Social Security, Medicare and to pay down the federal debt. What we are talking about in terms of the tax bill is this last dollar. And the reality is, whether we like it or not, I do not believe that this last dollar is going to get used to pay down the federal debt.

Now, in a perfect world, that would be great. But we all know we do not live in a perfect world. We live in Washington, D.C., which is anything but a perfect world. Now, if this was done in South Dakota, we might be able to do this. But the reality is, whether it is Republicans or Democrats, this is a Washington problem. Politicians spend money. The only question on this final dollar, and if we think of this as being the payroll tax, that FICA tax, Social Security and Medicare, that is \$3, and the last dollar is the income tax surplus. When those income tax surpluses start rolling in here to Washington, there are going to be a lot of designs on how to spend it.

What we have said as a matter of policy is that we believe the American people can spend this last dollar better than can Washington, D.C. So we went ahead and designed a tax package which I think strikes at the very heart and the very soul of what makes America tick. Everybody says, well, this is tax cuts for the rich. Well, in South Dakota we have a lot of farmers and ranchers and small business people. And when I ask them if they like the death tax, they say no. The death tax punishes people for saving for their kids and grandkids. We ought to get rid of it. Not only that, it is an inefficient tax. Sixty-five cents out of every dollar that is collected on the death tax goes to the cost of collecting the tax. It is an inefficient tax.

When I ask constituents whether they like the marriage penalty; do they like the fact that we penalize people and that they pay higher taxes for the privilege of being married, they say, no, we do not like that. That is a policy change that this bills makes. It is long overdue. We ought not penalize people in this country for being married. We ought to encourage that.

When I ask if they think we should tax capital gains on inflation, well, no, they do not think that sounds like a very good idea. Well, we make a change and index inflation in this bill so that it is not subject to a capital gains tax.

I have also asked if farmers, ranchers, and small business people ought to be able to deduct health insurance premiums. And that too, again, I think strikes at the very heart of those who are contributing to this society, helping generate this surplus and, frankly, in many cases, at least in my State, are very hard pressed. Farmers, ranchers, and small business people are trying to make ends meet in what is a very, very difficult agricultural economy.

These are policy changes which I think are very positive and they are long overdue. They are things that the American people could benefit from. And the alternative, as I said, is that this dollar gets spent in Washington. That is just reality. And I think we have to say honestly to the American people that all this talk and propaganda coming out of the White House and this administration about, boy, if they cut taxes it is going to cut farmers, it is going to cut veterans, it is going to cut water projects, it is going to cut education, I do not know where that comes from, because we are talking about surplus dollars.

We all agreed in 1997 to a balanced budget agreement which spends at a certain rate through the year 2002, and we assume beyond that, for the balance of this agreement, certain inflationary increases in spending. How they can argue that somehow this is going to rob or cut all these programs is beyond me. We are talking about surplus dollars. And I think the American people need to understand clearly what this argument is about. It is about the fact

that we are using \$3 out of \$4, if we can put this in small terms again, \$3 out of \$4 to preserve and protect Social Security and Medicare and to pay down the federal debt.

And the debate we are having in America today is about whether Washington spends this last buck or whether the American family spends it on things that they need; whether it is education, college education for their children, whether it is on mortgage payments, whether it is on school supplies or Christmas presents, whatever. We believe as a matter of principle and as a matter of policy that the American people are in a better position to make that decision about their futures and how best to use this last dollar.

I think it is important in the course of this debate and discussion that we debunk a lot of the myths that are being propagated by the other side. There is a lot of propaganda, a lot of rhetoric and demagoguery, as there always is in scare tactics that are used, because, again, the reality is in Washington, if we take this away from the politicians, it is money they cannot spend. And that is why they are trying so desperately to hang on to it. We believe, again as a matter of principle, as a matter of policy and practice, that this dollar is better spent by the American people, by the American family.

So I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding this evening to me. I think we probably concur because I believe his district is very much like mine; that those he represents are very much like those I represent. They are hard working people. They understand that this, the dollars they pay the Federal Government, is their money. We understand it is their money. We want them to keep more of it. That is what this debate is about. And I hope as it continues that we are able to convince the American people. And as they understand more clearly what we are talking about, I believe there will be a huge groundswell of support for what we are trying to accomplish here, which is to give them more power.

I believe when the American people have more in their pocket, they have the power. When Washington has the money, Washington has the power. We want the American people to have more power and more control over their future.

So I appreciate very much the gentleman from Colorado yielding some of his time this evening. I know he would like to talk some more about this issue and I would certainly yield back to him.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I want to add to the gentleman's comments.

That dollar that the administration says ought to stay in Washington, D.C. does one simple thing, it grows the size of the Government. There has never been a time in the history of politics, because of the human demands upon the politicians, that a pool of money can be left sitting in the Capital of a



State or in Washington, D.C. and think that the politicians are going to keep their hands off that and use that for some future reduction of the federal debt. It is not going to happen.

I think what else is important to my colleague, as he mentioned, is that there are some myths out there that need to be debunked. The Republicans said, look, we can take care of Social Security, we can take care of Medicare, and we need to do something with education, we need to do something with the military, we have to increase our spending with regard to the military, and we need to reduce the federal debt. We think that we can do all five of those things and still take that dollar, which is a small part of the \$4 that the gentleman had there, take that dollar and give it back to the taxpayers.

Now, our proposal to do that alarmed the administration. The President decided he could not let the Republicans get credit for giving back the people their money that came from them. He had to come up with a proposal. And he did come up with a proposal. And when it was scored by the Congressional Budget Office, it actually resulted in a tax increase. If we want to look at a bill that really reduces the debt, look at the history of the two parties and which party is carrying the bill that is really going to reduce that debt. We had 40 years of Democratic control in the United States Congress. Forty years the Democrats were in control. In that period of time I think they had one 2-year period where they had a balance.

What is the history of this? The Republicans' bill, and I am not trying to be partisan here, but we need to draw the lines where the lines have been drawn in these chambers, the Republican bill does more to reduce the federal debt than any other bill out there, period. Now, take a look historically. We have had the Democrats in control and ran deficits for 38 out of the 40 years. The Republicans took control just 5 years ago, and since then they brought up the balanced budget amendment. It was a Republican bill. Welfare reform; it was a Republican bill.

Now, how many of the Democrats, even the most liberal Democrats in this country, are complaining about the tax cut we gave 2 years ago? As the gentleman from the Dakotas knows, 2 years ago we went out to homeowners, homeowners regardless of their income, all they had to do was own a home, in the gentleman's district or in my district or in Mississippi or Massachusetts or in Florida or in Texas. We went out to the homeowners in this country, and we used the same argument and we got the same kind of disagreement from the Democrat leadership. Not all Democrats, because there are a lot of conservative Democrats who understand where this money comes from. But the Democrat leadership and the administration fought us on this homeowner deal.

What did we do with the homeowners? We went to every homeowner

in this country and told them that from this point on when they sell their home, and if they sell their home for a profit, not net equity but actually net profit, they get to take that, up to \$250,000 per person, \$500,000 per couple, they get to take that money, tax free, regardless of their age, and put it in their pockets.

So those Americans out there who have heard some of this bunk about Republicans and their tax plans, they should not forget that when they sell that home that they live in right now, thanks to the Republican leadership, they are going to get, with some rare exceptions, for instance, if an individual is very, very wealthy and they sell it for more than \$500,000 profit, otherwise anybody that sells it for a dollar profit up to \$500,000 profit per couple puts that money in their pocket. And it is money they will spend in their community. They will donate some to the church, they will go out and buy a new car, maybe buy another house. That money recirculates in the communities, not back here in the Washington, DC community.

So I appreciate and invite the gentleman to continue participating if he wishes, but I think the gentleman's example is right on point. I am glad he showed that dollar bill, because that dollar bill is right now in Washington, DC. What the gentleman has proposed and our colleagues have proposed is taking that dollar bill and putting it back in the local community. Because we think a dollar bill in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, or in the Dakotas, up there somewhere in the Dakotas, or in Miami, Florida, or in Los Angeles or in Seattle, Washington, or Salt Lake City, we think putting that dollar back into the local community is going to have a much more efficient use, be much more productive, be much more helpful for capital, much more helpful for the communities and the nonprofits and the schools than taking that dollar and keeping it right here in these House Chambers and sending it out to the Federal agencies. That is what the gentleman is saying and the gentleman is right, and I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. THUNE. Well, I thank the gentleman for continuing to yield. As I have tried to present this, I have asked the people of South Dakota one basic question, and that is this question: Do you think that the Federal Government in Washington is too small? Do you think that the Federal Government in Washington is too small?

Now, if the answer is yes to that question, obviously that person is going to like the President's plan to grow the size of government by spending the surplus. But I would suspect that most people, in fact when I ask this question across my State, I do not see any hands get raised. I am guessing if the gentleman asks that question in his district in Colorado he would get the same response. Most people in this country understand the Federal Government is big enough.

In fact, we believe, and I think most people believe, that we ought to continue this process that we have begun of shifting power out of Washington and back to those communities that the gentleman talked about, back to school districts, back to families, back to individuals so they can do more for their communities. We need for Washington to do less and the American people to do more.

Again, it does come back, and I want to say this so the American people do not miss this as we have this debate, what we are talking about, if we were to take that surplus and put it into small terms that people understand, \$3 goes to Social Security, to Medicare, and to pay down the Federal debt, and \$1, we think, basically 25 percent of the surplus, goes back to the American people. It is their money. And it is a ludicrous notion to think that if this money comes to Washington it is not going to get spent.

Mr. MCINNIS. And reclaiming my time once again, that \$1 that the gentleman held up, we hear from the Democratic leadership, through the propaganda going across this country, that that dollar is going to be used to reduce the Federal debt. What the gentleman said, and he is absolutely correct, if we leave that \$1 here in Washington, DC, it will not go for reducing the national debt; it will go for new programs and for new spending.

When we leave money around here, the new spending is a temptation. I am sure the gentleman knows this, at least as it applies to me, when I have people come into my office asking for new spending, these usually are not bad programs. They usually sound great.

□ 2200

But the question is, can we afford them? So the temptation to spend those dollars will fall on Republicans and Democrats back here. It is a strong temptation. We have a lot of our constituents out there who, if that dollar stays here, they say the dollar is going to stay in Washington, let us spend it for this program or let us spend it for that program. We all know that if we leave that dollar here it will grow the size of the Government.

What the Republicans are pushing for, and we are having a tough time getting our message across because it is very easy to spend it in 15 seconds, what the gentleman from the Dakotas and myself are trying to explain in 30 minutes, but the fact is if we leave that dollar in your pocket, in your community, it would work much better.

The only way that theory would not work is if when keeping that dollar in your community, in your pocket, you went out and buried it in the ground, literally put it in the ground other than it is either going to a bank, which will loan it back out to the community, it is going to be spent for goods and services, which circulate in the community.

Do my colleagues know what they should do? Sometimes some of these

companies have to pay taxes. They should pay their employees in \$2 bills, we still have a \$2 bill out there, pay in \$2 bills and see how often and how many places those \$2 bills show up in your community and how many weeks those \$2 bills are showing up in stores and all kinds of different places in your community versus coming back here to Washington.

I hope the gentleman stays. I want to point out a couple of other things on taxes we have just gotten from the Tax Foundation, and the Tax Foundation has a lot of credibility back here. It is a nonpartisan organization. We have just received in 1999 what Americans per capita will spend on things such as food, clothing, and shelter.

I want to show my colleagues some very stunning numbers. I will write them here very quickly for you.

On food in 1999, \$2,693. That is what the average per capita expenditure in the United States will be for food. For clothes, that will be \$1,404. So for food per capita, we are going to spend \$2,693. For clothes, we are going to spend \$1,404. And for shelter, we will spend \$5,833.

Now, if we add that up, assuming my math is right, that is \$9,930 per capita. So food is \$2,693. Clothes are \$1,404. And shelter is \$5,833. That is what you spend for those priority items in your family.

Guess what you will pay for taxes? \$10,298. In other words, the per capita expenditure per family in this country you will pay more for taxes than you do for your food, your clothes, and your shelter combined. Again, let me repeat that. We will all pay more in taxes than we will pay for our food, our clothes, and our shelter.

Now, we will also, another interesting thing, when you look at these numbers put out by the tax group, on Federal taxes alone, we will spend more than any other major budget item.

I want to put some examples out here. For housing, we will spend the \$5,833; for health care, \$3,829; for food, \$2,693; for transportation, \$2,568; for recreation, \$1,922; for clothing, \$1,404. For Federal taxes alone, just for Federal taxes, here is what we spend for Federal taxes: \$7,000.

So think about your budget, think about what you are spending in your family budget. These are roughly the figures that you will come up with: Housing \$5,833. You spend more in taxes than you do in housing for your family. Health care for your family, you will spend about \$3,829. This is per capita. You will spend a little over twice that for taxes, not quite twice, \$7,026. For food to feed the family, per capita, \$2,693 compared to what you are going to have to pay in taxes, \$7,026. For recreation, \$1,922 compared to the \$7,000 you are going to pay in taxes. For clothing, \$1,404 to clothe your family per capita, and you are going to spend over \$7,000 in taxes.

My point is this: There has been a lot of rhetoric lately about if we do not

provide some kind of tax relief for the American people then we hear from the Democratic party leadership that the Federal debt will only increase and they all of a sudden, the Democrat leadership, after 40 years of running deficits in this country, now, some of my colleagues do not like to hear partisanship and I am not trying to be partisan, but the fact is the Republicans did not run this House for 40 years, they have run it for 5 years; and we have had surpluses on almost all of those years.

We have had welfare reform. We had the tax cut I spoke about earlier. But the reality, what people do not want you to hear is that, guess what, when we reduce your taxes, when we allow you to keep those dollars in your pockets, guess what happens? The economy improves.

Take a look at any major tax relief or tax reduction in this century or in the century before it but since income tax came in this century, take a look at any one of them. Immediately after a tax reduction, the economy improved. When those dollars, again, unless you bury your dollars in the ground and you never see them again or you hide them and do not circulate them in your community, then in any other circumstance that will, one, keep down the size of government and, two, bring up the health of the economy.

Now, we have got a pretty good economy. Not everybody. My good friend from the Dakotas talks about the agriculture and the suffering, and they are suffering out in the farm belt. But there are a lot of people who are enjoying the healthiest, many of them, they will ever experience in their entire life. So they do not worry so much about taxes. Well, you pay a little tax here, you pay a little tax here.

Let me tell you what is happening while some of you are asleep. The governments, whether it is a local government, whether it is a State government, or whether it is the Federal Government, is sneaking into your house while you are asleep and those taxes are going up.

Most of the increase that you have seen in your taxes, the total tax package, has occurred since 1981. Most of that increase, 45 percent, 45 percent of the taxes that you pay are as a result of tax increases since 1981. All we are saying here is let us not fall asleep while the tax man sneaks in behind us.

Now, are taxes necessary? Of course they are necessary. We have certain responsibilities that belong to the Federal Government, a strong military. I think we have a fundamental obligation for good education in this country. We do have some health care obligations. We have transportation obligations for the interstate highways, interstate commerce. We have a justice system that has to be maintained.

So there are some fundamental obligations that the Federal Government must maintain. There are certainly obligations that the State government

must maintain. We agree with those. Our local districts, our school districts have a very heavy burden in providing what we want and that is quality education. Those dollars have to go in.

But it does not mean we should overpay and it does not mean when we pay our tax we should not ask our elected officials, am I paying too much? Am I getting a fair shake for my dollar? Am I getting efficient use out of that dollar? Is that dollar more productive in Washington, D.C., or is it more productive in my home State of Santa Clara, California, or Salt Lake City, Utah, or Kansas City, Kansas, or Carbondale, Colorado? Is this where those dollars are most efficient?

So, my colleagues, I am just trying to say to my colleagues here as this rhetoric goes on about the tax cut and how it is going to add to the Federal debt, take a look at the details. Read the fine print.

When you read the fine print, you are going to find out, frankly, really there are two choices. One, continue to grow the Government or, two, give back a portion of the surplus, not all of the surplus, but give back a portion of the surplus to the people who earned it.

Tax dollars are taxed to spend. That is the only reason we get taxed. It is the only reason our constituents out there get taxed. The only reason you are being taxed is so that some governmental body can spend that money. And as we said earlier, some of those expenses are justified. Some of them are necessary. But if you tend to allow accountability to become lax or the old saying that "when the cat is away, the mice will play," if you do not keep the cat in the barn, the mice pretty soon get out of control.

What we are saying here is let us exercise prudent financial management and let us tell our clients, the constituents, the taxpayers, you overpaid for this product. You deserve a little of it back. We still want to give you a fine product. You deserve it from the Government. But at this point you have overpaid a little, not a lot. The tax decrease we are talking about does not do a lot but it still keeps a few of those dollars in your pocket.

I have had a recent opportunity about 3 years ago, and this is exciting regardless of what party you are in regardless of your bent toward partisan politics, I have got something that I hope all of my colleagues take a very careful look at. It has been a tremendously successful program in my district, and I would like to explain it to my colleagues. It is called the S.E.E.D.S. program.

I actually started that program in the Third Congressional District of Colorado with the help of a lot of people Susan Smith, the City of Pueblo, County of Pueblo, several school districts, Pueblo Community College, Roger Gomez, a number of different people.

We all got together; and we found out that under the Federal regulations,

you can ask Federal agencies for their excess computer equipment. In other words, we have, for example, the Department of Energy who has been very cooperative with us. They have excess computer equipment. Some of this equipment is almost brand new.

Now, this is not state-of-the-art computer equipment. But most schools in our country do not have state-of-the-art computer equipment. In fact, in my district there were a number of schools that did not have really any computer equipment.

So what we did on our drive to cut down Government waste is we went to these different agencies and we said we would like you to ship those computers to a warehouse, which, by the way, was donated to our cause in Pueblo, Colorado, send them to our warehouse. We got students from Pueblo Community College to come in and help us put part A of the computer with part B, so on and so forth.

We got citizens to help us haul away the trash. We got citizens to help come down and do the mechanical work. We got citizens to volunteer and come down and help us match up the computers with schools that needed these computers. And before you know it, our program was off and running.

What were the results of our program? In our program in Colorado now, we are up to 200 sets of computers a week that we give to local schools, not just public schools, private schools, home schoolers, senior citizens. It is an exciting project. It provides a need for education which we think is very important.

Nobody disagrees that education is not important. And it takes away budget waste, Government waste, wasteful spending, which I think most of us would agree is not necessary. We take that waste, and we convert it to a good, positive use. It is called the S.E.E.D.S. program.

I am here this evening to tell my constituents, to tell my colleagues here on the House floor this is a program you should adopt, you should take a look at.

□ 2215

I would like to cover another area tonight. There has been some recent press, publicity, about a stand I have taken in regards to our military academies.

Let me precede my comments on the academies with the statement about the military. We need in this country the strongest military second to none in the world. Do not let people kid you. It would be a very terrible mistake for us to allow our military to fall into shambles and to become the second toughest kid on the block. You cannot be the second toughest kid on the block. You cannot be the third toughest kid on the block. You have got to be the toughest kid on the block.

It does not mean you go pick fights, but it does mean you will be in less fights because people will not want to

fight you. It also means that you can go out and help those people that are less fortunate because of your strength.

I believe in a strong military, and all of us should believe in a strong military. For too many years, the military has not received the kind of priority that is necessary, although the military for too many years has been called to different missions all over the world. I think right now we are stationed in 164 different locations.

So I have great respect for the military, but I also believe that the military has accountability.

I want to talk for a couple of minutes about our service academies. It is a great honor to be selected to go to the United States service academies, West Point, the Air Force Academy, the Naval Academy, the U.S. Coast Guard. The students that go there are not the cream of the crop. I repeat that. They are not the cream of the crop. They are the cream of the cream of the crop.

We take our very best students, and when we focus in on the students that we want to send to those military academies, I think there are a lot of things we need to look at and list in order of priority. Leadership skills, obviously intelligence capabilities, and maybe somewhere on the list, further down on the list, there are sports abilities or their celebrity status on sports.

Here is what is happening. This is my point that I disagreed very strongly with on some of the academies. When someone enters, say, the Air Force Academy, you make a commitment to the United States of America. You sign a deal with them. It is fully disclosed. There is nothing hidden about it. You tell the United States, in this case Air Force Academy, I will serve so many years in exchange for those 4 years of college education that the American people are giving me as a privilege, and it is a privilege. We pick great young men and women to be in the service, but you sign this commitment and just to be sure you fully understand that commitment, after 2 years of being in, say the U.S. Air Force Academy, we say to the students, look, you can walk away, no strings attached or we want you to make sure that you make an informed decision that if you continue at the Air Force Academy and complete your 4 years' education, you will have a commitment of service, you will have an obligation, you will have a duty. These students, by the way, live under an ethical code or a military code or an academy code that says, service to the Nation over self.

Well, what I have discovered is happening is, if you are in a very special class of people at the Air Force Academy, for example, you get treated differently than the other cadets. What am I talking about? If everyone was listening to me earlier this evening, I talked about heroes. We had two heroes in Grand Junction, Colorado. They lost their lives. I like sports. I enjoy the Broncos. I am a fan of the Broncos, but

even my favorite sports person, to me, is a celebrity, not a hero. But what happens at the academies, if you are a celebrity sports person, for example, an outstanding football player who has an opportunity to be drafted by the pros, you are going to get special treatment or some of them have received special treatment by the Air Force Academy, for example, that lets them walk away from their service commitment.

Now, they have to serve some time in the reserves, but they are not treated like every other cadet out there. Now, some people say, well, it is good publicity for us. It is necessary that we allow these academy graduates to walk away or be waived, that is the keyword, that is the buzz word, be waived from their duty and their service so that we get publicity in the pro football circuit.

My comment to that was, well, if we need publicity, why do we not just go ahead and let United Airlines, for example, or any airline, I fly United a lot, let any airline go to the Air Force Academy and say we would like your top pilots, go ahead and waive their service, we will pay them money, even though these athletes are not having to pay their \$120,000 which is the payback financially to the Government, we will go ahead, we like your top pilots. Do you think the Air Force Academy would release those pilots? Not on your life.

If Dow Chemical Corporation or some other chemical company, and I like Dow Chemical, if they went to the Air Force Academy and said we would like your top chemists, give us your top chemist students, do you think they would waiver those students out of there? Not on your life.

Let me read from an editorial, Rocky Mountain News. A Perk for Military Athletes. "Roger Staubach graduated from the Naval Academy, served his obligatory 4 years on active duty, and still enjoyed an 11-year career with the Dallas Cowboys that put him in the pro football Hall of Fame.

"Times have changed. Beau Morgan, the Air Force Academy's star quarterback from the class of 1997, was let out of what is now a 5-year commitment after only 2 years so he could try out with the Dallas Cowboys this summer.

"It is part of a trend that apparently began in 1989 when the Naval Academy graduate David Robinson was released after just 2 years' active duty, enabling him to play with the NBA's San Antonio Spurs. Now an angry U.S. Representative Scott McInnis, Republican of Colorado, is threatening to introduce legislation that would put an end to this practice. 'When these kids go to the academy, we try and teach them that you put your Nation above yourself, but that is not what is occurring here.'

"There are a number of other examples. Steve Russ, a line backer with the Denver Broncos, was released from his military commitment in 1997, 2 years after his Air Force Academy graduation. Air Force Academy grad Dan

Palmer also got an early out to try out with the Chicago Bears as an offensive lineman.

"For 2 years, McInnis has been trying to use the Freedom of Information Act to get a complete list of those who received waivers from service academies for athletic purposes, but he is having a hard time of it."

"It is easy to understand why the military schools might be tempted to fudge the rules in order to entice more athletes. For decades they played at the top levels of intercollegiate athletics, but that is no longer true. A military career is just not as attractive to top athletes as it once was. Frustrated academy graduates who are now generals and admirals want to do what they can to slow or reverse the trend. The military tries to justify the current policy by saying that their star athletes serve effectively as academy recruiters upon their early release, but we suspect the kids they mainly recruit are other outstanding athletes who will also expect early releases.

"Those who get releases, after signing pro contracts, do not have to repay the \$120,000 cost of their education and they do not have to go back to active duty even if they are later cut by their teams. Their only obligation is to spend 6 years in the Reserves.

"If pro athletes serve as effective recruiters, says McInnis, why not let United Airlines recruit the top pilots from the Air Force Academy, so long as they say on the airplane, 'You are being flown by an Air Force Academy graduate.'

"McInnis dismisses the suggestion that early releases might be all right if the graduate or his employer simply repays the Government the cost of his or her education. The economics of professional athletes are such that \$120,000 is merely, quote, what professional teams spend on refreshments at weekend resorts, unquote.

"The point, says McInnis, is that academy athletes deserve no privileges that other graduates cannot get. 'It is just wrong,' he says, of the early-release policy. 'It makes me mad.'

"Considering the athletes the major state universities recruit, how little some of them study and how few of them ultimately graduate, the service academies should not be ashamed that their cadets can no longer compete at that level. If they have to play smaller schools, it is no disgrace.

"But the early-out policy for their athletes is a disgrace, and should be stopped."

Folks, my point is very clear. We are proud of these academies. The Air Force Academy and West Point and the Coast Guard and the Naval Academy have served this country very well. Our great military leaders, some of our presidents, many of our great leaders in this country have come from those academies. Why? Because when you go to an academy, it is a pretty special place. It has the highest of standards, and it has the highest of ethical codes.

I think we are diluting that. I think we are diluting the reputation of all the preceding graduates of these academies for the entire history of those academies by taking a special class of athletes and treating them differently, by letting them out of their obligations early. Again, remember, we do not do it for any other class of Air Force or Naval or West Point or Coast Guard Academy graduate. It is wrong. We should stand up and say to the American people, you can expect more from our academies.

I want to mention a couple of other things in conclusion this evening. First of all, as I said earlier, I come from the third district of Colorado. This is a very special season coming up in Colorado so I am going to do a little promotion. I hope all of my colleagues have an opportunity to go out and see our colors in the Aspen trees. The district I represent is the highest district in the United States. They have a lot of beautiful communities, a lot of great ski resorts, Aspen, Sonoma, Steamboat, Telluride. I will get in trouble because I do not name them all, but virtually every ski resort in Colorado is in that district.

So if my colleagues get an opportunity, we invite them to come out to Colorado. Come and visit us. Come and see what beauty we have out there. But I also want to point out something else. When my colleagues head out of this city, take a look at how important it is that we allow the average working Joe and the average working Jane in this country to be promised and to expect fair treatment by their Government when it comes to taxes.

Every Government leader out there should understand that they have a fiduciary duty, an obligation, to try and deliver the most efficient services the Government can at the least amount of cost, and every Government official out there has an obligation to you, the working Joe and the working Jane, the people that provide these dollars, there is an obligation on behalf of every elected or every Government employee or every Government official to make sure that you are not being overcharged.

There is an obligation by every one of us in these chambers to look at that taxpayer and we ought to say thank you to them. We ought to say thank you to the working people of this country, because if it were not for the 8 or 12 or 14 hours they work every day 5 or 6 or 7 days a week, that money to provide for the programs that we run out of these chambers would not be here. We owe them a big thank you, and we also owe them the duty to make sure that when we spend those dollars we spend them effectively, that we are fair to the taxpayer.

Our system needs taxes. It has to operate with taxes, but our system has a fundamental requirement of fairness and openness to the people that send that money to Washington. And when we have an opportunity to send that

money and put it back in the pocket-books of those hard working Americans that provide those dollars, we should take it.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. TOWNS (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today before 6 p.m. on account of personal business.

Mr. CROWLEY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today after 2 p.m. on account of official business.

Mr. ROGAN (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SCOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RUSH, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BEREUTER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, for 5 minutes, September 16.

Mr. BEREUTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. METCALF, for 5 minutes, today.

#### SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1076. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance programs providing health care and other benefits for veterans, to authorize major medical facility projects, to reform eligibility for burial in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

#### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Administration, reported that that committee had examined and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 457. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to increase the amount of leave time available to a Federal employee in any year in connection with serving as an organ donor, and for other purposes.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 30 minutes

p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, September 13, 1999, at 12:30 p.m., for morning hour debates.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3974. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Pork Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Order—Decrease in Importer Assessments [No. LS-99-03] received August 17, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3975. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Mediterranean Fruit Fly; Removal of Quarantined Area [Docket No. 98-083-6] received September 8, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3976. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a request for transfers from the Information Technology Systems and Related Expenses Account for Year 2000 compliance to the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Export Administration, the Department of the Treasury, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission; (H. Doc. No. 106-116); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

3977. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a request for transfers from the Information Technology Systems and Related Expenses Account for Year 2000 compliance to the Department of the Interior, Labor, the Treasury, and to the District of Columbia; (H. Doc. No. 106-117); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

3978. A letter from the Director, Congressional Budget Office, transmitting CBO's Sequestration Update Report for Fiscal Year 2000, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. section 904(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

3979. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on the transfer of property to the Republic of Panama under the Panama Canal Treaty of 1977 and related agreements, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 3784(b); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3980. A letter from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting approval of the retirement of Lieutenant General Charles H. Roadman II, United States Airforce, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3981. A letter from the President and Chairman, Export-Import Bank, transmitting transactions involving U.S. exports to the People's Republic of China (China); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

3982. A letter from the President and Director, Export-Import Bank, transmitting transactions involving exports to Mexico; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

3983. A letter from the President and Director, Export-Import Bank, transmitting transactions involving U.S. exports to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

3984. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting Final Regu-

lations—Direct Grant Programs, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232(f); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

3985. A letter from the Administrator, Energy Information Administration, transmitting the Energy Information Administration's "Annual Energy Review 1998," pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 790f(a)(2); to the Committee on Commerce.

3986. A letter from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting the annual report summarizing the findings of the Public Health Service Act; to the Committee on Commerce.

3987. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iraq that was declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); (H. Doc. No. 106-115); to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed.

3988. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under a contract to France [Transmittal No. DTC 57-99], pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(d); to the Committee on International Relations.

3989. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed Manufacturing License Agreement with Germany [Transmittal No. DTC 97-99], pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(d); to the Committee on International Relations.

3990. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under a contract to Russia [Transmittal No. DTC 98-99], pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

3991. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under a contract to Turkey [Transmittal No. DTC 125-98], pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

3992. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under a contract to France [Transmittal No. DTC 21-99], pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

3993. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles or defense services sold commercially under a contract to Greece [Transmittal No. DTC 18-99], pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

3994. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); to the Committee on International Relations.

3995. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); to the Committee on International Relations.

3996. A letter from the Comptroller General, General Accounting Office, transmitting List of all reports issued or released by the GAO in June 1999, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 719(h); to the Committee on Government Reform.

3997. A letter from the Executive Director, Committee For Purchase From People Who Are Blind Or Severely Disabled, transmitting the Committee's final rule—Additions to the Procurement List—received August 24, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Government Reform.

3998. A letter from the Comptroller General, transmitting the Research Notification System through July 6, 1999; to the Committee on Government Reform.

3999. A letter from the Chairman, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting the Board's report entitled "The Role of Delegated Examining Units: Hiring New Employees in a Decentralized Civil Service," pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 1204(a)(3); to the Committee on Government Reform.

4000. A letter from the Acting Assistant Administrator For Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule—International Fisheries Regulations; Pacific Tuna Fisheries [Docket No. 990212047-9208-02; I.D. 111998C] (RIN: 0648-AL28) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

4001. A letter from the Acting Assistant Administrator For Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule—Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Groupers Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Restricted Reopening of Limited Access Permit Application Process [Docket No. 990820230-9230-01; I.D. 080599B] (RIN: 0648-AM92) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

4002. A letter from the Reserve Officers Association, transmitting a copy of the Report of Audit for the year ending 31 March 1999 of the Association's accounts, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 1101(41) and 1103; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4003. A letter from the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting notification that funding under Title V of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended, will exceed \$5 million for the response to the emergency declared on June 23, 1998, as a result of the extreme fire hazards which severely impacted the State of Texas from June 4, 1998 through and including November 3, 1998, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5193; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4004. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Amendment to Class E Airspace; York, NE [Airspace Docket No. 99-ASO-25] received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4005. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Establishment of Class D Airspace; Tupelo, MS [Airspace Docket No. 99-ASO-10] received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4006. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Procedures for Protests and Contract Disputes; Amendment of Equal Access to Justice Act Regulations; Correction [Docket No. FAA-1998-4379; Amendment No. 14-03, Part 17 (New)] (RIN: 2120-AG19) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4007. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; de Havilland Inc. Models DHC-6-1, DHC-6-100, DHC-6-200, and DHC-6-300 Airplanes [Docket No. 97-CE-10-AD; Amendment 39-11279; AD 99-18-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4008. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Model F27 Mark 050 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99-NM-224-AD; Amendment 39-11278; AD 99-18-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4009. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Israel Aircraft Industries, Ltd. (IAI), Model 1124 and 1124A Series Airplanes [Docket No. 98-NM-332-AD; Amendment 39-11274; AD 99-18-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4010. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Raytheon Aircraft Company Beech Models C90A, B200, B300, and 1900D Airplanes [Docket No. 99-CE-56-AD; Amendment 39-11281; AD 99-18-15] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4011. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Short Brothers Model SD3-SHERPA, SD3-60 SHERPA, SD3-30, and SD3-60 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 98-NM-369-AD; Amendment 39-11276; AD 99-18-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4012. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Short Brothers Model SD3-30 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 98-NM-349-AD; Amendment 39-11275; AD 99-18-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 4, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4013. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747-400 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 98-NM-222-AD; Amendment 39-11273; AD 99-18-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4014. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99-NM-77-AD; Amendment 39-11269; AD 99-18-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4015. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Di-

rectives; Dornier Model 328-100 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 96-NM-113-AD; Amendment 39-11270; AD 99-18-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4016. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Dowty Aerospace Propellers Model R381/6-123-F/5 Propellers [Docket No. 99-NE-43-AD; Amendment 39-11284; AD 99-18-18] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4017. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Short Brothers Model SD3-SHERPA, SD3-60 SHERPA, SD3-30, and SD3-60 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99-NM-12-AD; Amendment 39-11277; AD 99-18-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4018. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Model 205A-1 and 205B Helicopters [Docket No. 98-SW-72-AD; Amendment 39-11268; AD 99-18-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4019. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Aerospatiale Model ATR42-300 and ATR42-320 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 98-NM-201-AD; Amendment 39-11272; AD 99-18-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 3, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. COBLE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1752. A bill to make improvements in the operation and administration of the Federal courts, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 106-312). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

#### PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. HAYWORTH (for himself and Mr. PASTOR):

H.R. 2820. A bill to provide for the ownership and operation of the irrigation works on the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community's reservation in Maricopa County, Arizona, by the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. DINGELL (for himself and Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 2821. A bill to amend the North American Wetlands Conservation Act to provide for appointment of 2 additional members of

the North American Wetlands Conservation Council; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. BENTSEN (for himself, Mr. PORTER, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. HOYER, Mr. WEYGAND, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mr. VENTO, and Mrs. LOWEY):

H.R. 2822. A bill to require the opposition of the United States to International Monetary Fund and World Bank loans to Indonesia until the violence resulting from the referendum on the independence of East Timor has been ended; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

By Mr. CANNON:

H.R. 2823. A bill to amend the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 to provide for the retention and administration of Oil Shale Reserve Numbered 2 by the Secretary of Energy; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. COOKSEY, Mr. HILLEARY, Mr. VITTER, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. REGULA, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, and Mr. WELDON of Florida):

H.R. 2824. A bill to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to protect consumers in managed care plans and other health coverage; to the Committee on Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DUNCAN:

H.R. 2825. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to dispose of all public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management that have been identified for disposal under the Federal land use planning process; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mrs. EMERSON (for herself and Mr. HULSHOF):

H.R. 2826. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow penalty-free distributions from qualified retirement plans on account of the death or disability of the participant's spouse; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. EWING (for himself and Mr. SHIMKUS):

H.R. 2827. A bill to amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to authorize research to promote the conversion of biomass into biobased industrial products, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Science, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon:

H.R. 2828. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require criminal background checks on drivers providing Medicaid medical assistance transportation services; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Ms. KAPTUR (for herself, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. GILCHREST, Mrs. CLAYTON, and Mr. BISHOP):

H.R. 2829. A bill to amend the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921, to provide the Secretary of Agriculture with administrative authority to investigate live poultry dealers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. KAPTUR (for herself and Mr. BISHOP):

H.R. 2830. A bill to amend the Agricultural Fair Practices Act of 1967 to provide for the accreditation of associations of agricultural producers, to promote good faith bargaining between such accredited associations and the handlers of agricultural products, and to strengthen the enforcement authorities to respond to violations of the Act; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. LUTHER:

H.R. 2831. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure Medicare reimbursement for certain ambulance services, and to improve the efficiency of the emergency medical system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PALLONE (for himself and Mr. LOBIONDO):

H.R. 2832. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to inventory, evaluate, document, and assist efforts to restore and preserve surviving United States Life-Saving Service stations; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. PASTOR:

H.R. 2833. A bill to establish the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. SANDERS:

H.R. 2834. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify State and local authority to regulate the placement, construction, and modification of broadcast transmission and telecommunications facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. SANDERS:

H.R. 2835. A bill to require an assessment of research on effects of radio frequency emissions on human health; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. VITTER:

H.R. 2836. A bill to amend the Fair Housing Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WEINER (for himself, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. FROST, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. KELLY, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LEE, Mrs. THURMAN, and Ms. CARSON):

H.R. 2837. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education to widely distribute information describing their procedures for receiving and responding to complaints concerning harassment; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. WEYGAND (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts):

H.R. 2838. A bill to impose an immediate suspension of assistance to the Government of Indonesia until the results of the August 30, 1999, vote in East Timor have been implemented, and for other purposes; to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as

fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HASTINGS of Florida:

H. Con. Res. 183. Concurrent resolution calling upon the Government of Indonesia to respect the results of the September 4, 1999, referendum on the status of East Timor and to bring about an immediate end to the violence in East Timor with the assistance of United Nations forces if necessary; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. DUNN, Mr. TURNER, Mrs. BONO, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. LAZIO, Mr. WOLF, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. ROEMER, and Mr. BONILLA):

H. Con. Res. 184. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the importance of "family friendly" programming on television; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. WEYGAND:

H. Con. Res. 185. Concurrent resolution supporting the results of the East Timor plebiscite held on August 30, 1999, and calling for an end to the violence in East Timor; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. CAPUANO (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DELAHUNT, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. HALL of Ohio, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. KING, Ms. LEE, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. LUTHER, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OLVER, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. WOLF, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mrs. MORELLA):

H. Res. 285. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the referendum in East Timor and calling on the Government of Indonesia and all other parties to the current civil unrest in East Timor to assist in any attempts to immediately terminate the paramilitary's campaign of violence and terror and comply with the overwhelming results of the August 30, 1999, popular consultation; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. PACKARD (for himself and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

H. Res. 286. A resolution recognizing that prevention of youth suicide is a compelling national priority; to the Committee on Commerce.

#### ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 38: Mr. CUNNINGHAM.  
H.R. 41: Ms. DANNER.  
H.R. 65: Mr. PALLONE.  
H.R. 71: Mr. GORDON, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. SWEENEY.  
H.R. 72: Mr. GOSS, Mrs. BONO, Mr. RADANOVICH, and Mr. GOODLATTE.  
H.R. 97: Ms. KAPTUR.  
H.R. 125: Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, and Mr. DIXON.  
H.R. 269: Mr. FARR of California, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LEE, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Mr. WEINER.  
H.R. 270: Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Ms. RIVERS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. HINCHAY, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. GREEN of Texas, and Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut.  
H.R. 274: Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LAZIO, Mr. GORDON, and Mr. MOORE.

H.R. 303: Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. MOORE.

H.R. 306: Ms. BALDWIN and Mr. BAIRD.

H.R. 354: Mr. REGULA.

H.R. 355: Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 418: Mr. WEINER.

H.R. 534: Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin.

H.R. 549: Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 561: Mr. WAXMAN.

H.R. 568: Mr. SANDLIN.

H.R. 583: Mr. CLEMENT, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. BILBRAY.

H.R. 626: Mr. BONIOR, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.

H.R. 639: Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin.

H.R. 652: Mr. KLINK.

H.R. 699: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 701: Mr. MICA, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. BUCHER, Mr. SHAW, and Mr. PHELPS.

H.R. 723: Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 731: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Ms. BERKLEY.

H.R. 735: Mr. BARCIA.

H.R. 750: Mr. MOORE, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. WEINER.

H.R. 756: Mr. PACKARD.

H.R. 773: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 783: Mr. COYNE, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. ROGAN, and Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky.

H.R. 784: Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. COYNE.

H.R. 785: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 798: Mr. PHELPS.

H.R. 845: Mrs. KELLY.

H.R. 852: Mr. BOUCHER.

H.R. 864: Mr. MICA.

H.R. 865: Mr. SPRATT and Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky.

H.R. 1046: Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. WISE, Mr. DEFazio, and Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky.

H.R. 1070: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 1082: Mr. MEEKS of New York.

H.R. 1093: Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 1106: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 1111: Mr. ISAKSON and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1119: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.R. 1130: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 1173: Mr. PORTER.

H.R. 1176: Mr. SANDERS.

H.R. 1180: Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. TALENT, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. POMBO, Mr. SANDLIN, and Mr. SWEENEY.

H.R. 1222: Mr. SNYDER and Mr. EDWARDS.

H.R. 1237: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1248: Mr. KOLBE, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. HILLIARD, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Ms. WATERS, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ.

H.R. 1278: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 1312: Ms. RIVERS.

H.R. 1328: Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 1356: Mr. OXLEY.

H.R. 1358: Mr. SESSIONS and Mr. PHELPS.

H.R. 1363: Mr. SCHAFER.

H.R. 1396: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. OLVER, Mr. WEINER, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. BROWN of Ohio.

H.R. 1422: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. BARCIA, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. LAMPSON, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. VENTO, Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1423: Mrs. THURMAN.

H.R. 1424: Mrs. THURMAN and Mr. GORDON.

H.R. 1446: Mr. MCINTOSH.

H.R. 1452: Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. QUINN, Mr. GEKAS, and Mr. CAMPBELL.

H.R. 1464: Mr. BLUNT.

H.R. 1482: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Ms. PELOSI.

H.R. 1485: Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 1549: Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 1577: Mr. MCINTOSH, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, and Mrs. CUBIN.

H.R. 1579: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. HANSEN, and Mr. McDERMOTT.



H.R. 1592: Mrs. NORTHUP.  
H.R. 1604: Mr. FORD.  
H.R. 1606: Mr. MCGOVERN.  
H.R. 1634: Mr. GOODLATTE and Mr. KASICH.  
H.R. 1640: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. COYNE, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. GORDON.  
H.R. 1644: Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut, Ms. NORTON, and Mrs. MINK of Hawaii.  
H.R. 1650: Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. COOK, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CONDIT, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.  
H.R. 1663: Ms. CARSON.  
H.R. 1693: Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. LATHAM.  
H.R. 1705: Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin.  
H.R. 1710: Mr. HANSEN.  
H.R. 1736: Mr. CLEMENT.  
H.R. 1760: Mr. TRAFICANT and Mr. LOBIONDO.  
H.R. 1775: Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BAIRD, and Mr. MCGOVERN.  
H.R. 1795: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. COOK, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. PELOSI, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. BERKLEY, and Mrs. MYRICK.  
H.R. 1816: Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BALDACC, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. DIXON, Mr. MOAKLEY, and Mr. GONZALEZ.  
H.R. 1837: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CLEMENT, Mrs. KELLY, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. DELAURO, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Mr. DEFazio.  
H.R. 1857: Mr. BROWN of Ohio.  
H.R. 1883: Mr. LANTOS.  
H.R. 1899: Mr. SPRATT and Ms. ESHOO.  
H.R. 1917: Mr. LANTOS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. BONILLA, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. DICKEY, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. WEINER, Mr. FARR of California, and Mr. SUNUNU.  
H.R. 1933: Mr. PACKARD and Mr. CHAMBLISS.  
H.R. 1938: Mr. FROST.  
H.R. 1999: Mrs. KELLY.  
H.R. 2013: Mr. ENGLISH.  
H.R. 2030: Mrs. KELLY.  
H.R. 2053: Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.  
H.R. 2129: Mr. DEAL of Georgia and Mr. MCKEON.  
H.R. 2162: Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. MASCARA, and Mr. PACKARD.  
H.R. 2166: Mr. FILNER, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CAMPBELL, and Mr. LAZIO.  
H.R. 2241: Mr. LANTOS, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. SISISKY, Mr. PITTS, Mr. DICKEY, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. FILNER, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. STEARNS, and Mr. BOYD.  
H.R. 2246: Mr. MURTHA.  
H.R. 2260: Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.  
H.R. 2265: Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. GORDON.  
H.R. 2319: Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. DOYLE, and Ms. CARSON.  
H.R. 2335: Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. HILL of Montana, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. DEMINT, and Mr. DOOLEY of California.  
H.R. 2237: Mr. HAYWORTH.  
H.R. 2341: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. SISISKY, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. DICKEY, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. COYNE, Mr. BONILLA, Mr. FORD, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. EWING, Mr. DEUTSCH, and Mr. HOBSON.

H.R. 2356: Mrs. KELLY and Mr. SPRATT.  
H.R. 2362: Mr. BAKER and Mr. SMITH of Texas.  
H.R. 2383: Mr. KOLBE.  
H.R. 2389: Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. OWENS, Mr. METCALF, and Mrs. EMERSON.  
H.R. 2401: Mr. SANDLIN.  
H.R. 2418: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. RILEY, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. LARGENT, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. JOHN, and Mr. MCCREERY.  
H.R. 2419: Mr. GIBBONS, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. FILNER, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Ms. DAN-  
NER, and Mr. MARTINEZ.  
H.R. 2420: Mrs. NORTHUP, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BALDACC, Mr. EVERETT, Ms. SANCHEZ, Mr. POMBO, and Mr. CUMMINGS.  
H.R. 2436: Mr. CUSTELLO, Mr. VITTER, Mrs. EMERSON, and Mr. OBERSTAR.  
H.R. 2442: Mr. LARSON, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. HORN, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, and Mrs. MEEK of Florida.  
H.R. 2463: Mr. WISE, Mrs. BONO, Mr. GOSS, and Mr. PHELPS.  
H.R. 2492: Mr. BENTSEN and Mr. McNULTY.  
H.R. 2500: Mr. STARK.  
H.R. 2503: Ms. DELAURO.  
H.R. 2505: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. HOLT, Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO, and Mr. JEFFERSON.  
H.R. 2511: Mr. HUNTER and Mr. SCHAFER.  
H.R. 2533: Mr. SCARBOROUGH.  
H.R. 2543: Mr. FORD, Mr. BAKER, Mr. HILL of Montana, and Mr. GOODE.  
H.R. 2548: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. DUNCAN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. PICKERING, and Mr. HILL of Montana.  
H.R. 2576: Mr. SUNUNU and Mr. GRAHAM.  
H.R. 2594: Mr. STARK, Mr. FARR of California, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. FROST, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. RIVERS, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. EVANS, Mr. SCOTT, and Mr. MEEHAN.  
H.R. 2595: Mr. OBEY and Ms. RIVERS.  
H.R. 2612: Mr. BARR of Georgia.  
H.R. 2620: Mr. GOODLATTE.  
H.R. 2631: Mr. BONIOR, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. SANDLIN, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.  
H.R. 2639: Mr. BASS, Mr. MCINTOSH, and Mr. PEASE.  
H.R. 2640: Mr. EHRlich and Mr. UPTON.  
H.R. 2651: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas and Mrs. KELLY.  
H.R. 2655: Mr. GARY MILLER of California.  
H.R. 2678: Mr. McNULTY.  
H.R. 2689: Mr. LOBIONDO.  
H.R. 2696: Mr. ABERCROMBIE.  
H.R. 2720: Mr. METCALF, Mr. FILNER, Mr. COOK, and Mr. FALCOMA.  
H.R. 2722: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DIXON, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Mr. LAFALCE, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. FILNER, Mr. OWENS, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. STARK, Mr. OLVER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. NADLER, Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. LEE, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. UNDERWOOD, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. FROST.  
H.R. 2726: Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. LUCAS of Kentucky, Mr. MCINTOSH, Mr. COOK, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. RYUN of Kansas, and Mr. HAYES.  
H.R. 2790: Mr. WOLF, Mrs. ROUKEMA, and Mr. BOEHLERT.  
H.R. 2792: Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. FROST, Mr. TANNER, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. PHELPS, Mr. SISISKY, and Mr. SANDLIN.  
H.R. 2795: Mr. KOLBE.  
H.R. 2801: Mr. KANJORSKI.

H.R. 2809: Mr. WEYGAND, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. PAYNE, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.  
H.J. Res. 41: Mr. LUTHER, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. COYNE, Ms. CARSON, Mr. HOYER, Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.  
H.J. Res. 56: Mr. SWEENEY.  
H.J. Res. 64: Mr. STUMP.  
H. Con. Res. 30: Mr. LAZIO, Mr. BONILLA, and Mr. BASS.  
H. Con. Res. 34: Ms. STABENOW.  
H. Con. Res. 60: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. GANSKE, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. MASCARA.  
H. Con. Res. 97: Mr. STARK.  
H. Con. Res. 100: Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. WATERS, and Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon.  
H. Con. Res. 120: Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. ROGAN, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. ORTIZ, and Mr. DIXON.  
H. Con. Res. 135: Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. POMEROY, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. McNULTY, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. ACKERMAN.  
H. Con. Res. 148: Mr. MCKEON.  
H. Con. Res. 159: Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Ms. WATERS.  
H. Res. 15: Mr. SANDLIN.  
H. Res. 89: Mr. SANDLIN and Mr. LAZIO.  
H. Res. 224: Mr. FARR of California, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. BARCIA, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, and Mr. PHELPS.  
H. Res. 251: Mr. WEINER, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. DEFazio, and Mr. CLEMENT.  
H. Res. 254: Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, Mr. WEINER, Mr. DEUTSCH, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. FROST, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. HILL of Indiana, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. WELLER, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. ROEMER, Mr. OWENS, Mr. LEACH, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. CRANE, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Mr. SANDLIN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. FARR of California, and Ms. PELOSI.  
H. Res. 269: Mr. GIBBONS and Ms. MCKINNEY.

## DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 1621: Mr. CHAMBLISS.  
H.R. 2788: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.

## AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 2684

OFFERED BY: MS. JACKSON-LEE OF TEXAS

AMENDMENT No. 19: Page 79, line 5, insert "(increased by \$250,000,000)" after the dollar amount.

Page 79, line 19, insert "(increased by \$449,000,000)" after the dollar amount.

Page 80, line 14, insert "(increased by \$225,600,000)" after the dollar amount.